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A BATTLE FOR JUSTICE.

The Strange Story of Hugh Vinton's Ward — A Curious Piece of Villiany — The Valley Iron Works Strike.

By J. HOWARD BAUMAN.

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CHAPTER I.
THE ORPHAN'S ARRIVAL.

One lovely June afternoon Hugh Vinton was sitting in his office in an easy chair, with his feet resting on the desk. He held in his mouth an unlit cigar, and in his fingers he held a letter, which he was alternately folding and unfolding. He had just finished reading it.

This man was what the world at large would call fine looking. He was six feet tall, weighed one hundred and sixty. His well formed head was covered with a plentiful supply of black, curly locks, and his honest, brown eyes looked look any man straight in the face.

Hugh Vinton was manager of the Valley Iron Works, and a heavy stockholder in the company. He was a single man, and from all appearances he was apt to remain so. He was a thorough business man, and to his tact much of the success of the mill was due.

A dark frown crossed his brow as he finished reading the letter he held in his hand.

"Confound the luck!" he muttered to himself, "what am I to do with the girl? I have no home to take her to; and I don't know what Jim Harlan meant by sending her to me. Why didn't he leave her in the care of someone nearer home? Let me see, the letter says she would start at noon Wednesday. It would take her about three days to get here." Again he perused the troublesome letter.

"Dear Hugh: I sing away out here with no friends to trust my little girl to. You know you once said—it was when Areta was a baby, and her mother was still living—that if anything happened to us, you would take care of her. I am taking you at your word. This letter will not be posted until I am gone; and then the little girl will come direct to you. May God watch over and keep you as you keep her. Good-by, old friend; for when you get this, I will be gone to meet my wife on the other side. Your old friend.—Jim Harlan."

A line at the bottom was written in a childish hand: "Papa is gone to heaven, and I will come to you as he told me to.—Areta."

"Well," mused Hugh, "suppose I must make the best of it. I will hustle her off to some boarding-school; that will be the easiest way to get her out of the way."

Hugh's train of thought was suddenly cut short by a faint rap on the door. "Come in," he called out, in his always cheerful manner.

The door opened a little way, and a head covered with an abundant growth of beautiful auburn hair—not red—was cautiously poked through the opening, and a gentle voice asked: "Are you Mr. Vinton?"

"I am my little lady; that is my name."

"I am awful glad I found you so easy. My name is Areta Harlan; but at home they call me Dot for short."

"Oh, ho! So this is Jim's little girl, is it? Here, take this seat and rest yourself," said Hugh, arising; "you must be very tired after traveling so far."

"Yes, sir, I am tired. It is so far from home, I thought I would soon be to the end of the world."

"And so you are to be my little girl now?"

"That is what papa told me. He said I was to mind you just as I minded him, and that you would be good to me."

"Did he tell you that? Well, I will do my best toward Jim's girl. How old are you, Dot? I will call you by that name, if you don't care."

"Just seven," answered the little lady.

"My, oh! How time does fly; it seems only a few months since your father left here for the west, and yet, it is nearly seven years, for at that time you were only a little tot in long dresses."

"Did you know my papa very well?"

"Of course I did; we were schoolboys together."

"You scoundrel!" exclaimed Hugh.

"Poor papa! He was always talking about his churn Hugh."

Hugh and his little ward talked on various subjects for an hour more, when he closed up his desk and told the girl they would go home.

"For the present you will have a room at my boarding house, Mrs. Smithson will take care of you, and you must be a good girl, and do just as she says."

"Indeed, I will be awful good," Dot assured him.

"Have you any trunk or satchel at the station?" asked Hugh.

"Yes, sir, and here is the thing the man told me to give you when I got here." She handed Hugh the baggage checks.

When the little leather-covered trunk was taken up to the room duly assigned the little lady, it was found to contain nothing that would be of much use in this new life she was to begin. The contents would answer only as relics of the past life in Colorado among the honest-hearted but rough miners of that section. Mrs. Smithson, who helped to unpack the articles, dear to the childish fancy, informed Hugh of this fact.

"Well," answered that man, "as it would hardly be proper to dress a person in an eastern city in the style of the western mountains, I suppose the first thing to be done will be to provide her with a new wardrobe. You can buy just what you think she needs, and have it made up as her future position in life demands. Then we must make arrangements to start her to school; she must have a first-class education, and be fitted for a useful life. You know the needs of the child better than I do; so I wish to leave her in your sole charge, and as I am very favorably impressed with her, I do not think she will give you much trouble. Will you, on the grounds of a liberal remuneration, accept this responsibility?"

"Indeed, Mr. Hugh, I will do by her as I would by one of my own little lassies," answered the motherly woman. "I believe you, Mrs. Smithson," said Hugh, "for I wouldn't leave Dot in your care for I never want it said that I failed to do the right thing by poor Jim's child."

And so, after a short interval of preparation, Areta Harlan entered that grand institution of learning, the public school, feeder of, as it was first intended, a private school.

She proved a ready learner, for all the praise her guardian or Mrs. Smithson bestowed upon her, she never shirked hard lessons, but worked diligently on until she mastered them.

Hugh found it a source of pleasure to while away the evenings with his little ward, after a busy day at the mill office. Her bright, childish talk would drive away the business-thoughts and weariness, from which he never otherwise escaped.

Although the memory of the father and mother, who were lying side by side under the earth of the mountain home, ever remained fresh in the child's mind, Hugh never wished to sadden her by talking of the departed. But one day, for the first time, he touched upon the subject of the past. "Do you like to live here as well as in your old mountain home?" he asked.

"I like to live here, guardy; you are so good and kind to me; but I miss poor dear papa so much, and I loved our little cabin home on the mountain. I loved to hear the birds sing, and to gather flowers. Why do the birds not come here to sing? I never see anything but those little sparrows, and they can't sing a bit pretty. If they are the ones God allows to come to the city, I wonder why he don't make them sing?"

"But," added Hugh, "you can have all the flowers you want. Just think of that lovely big rose upstairs in your room."

"I know, guardy, but I liked the little flowers I used to pick near the big rocks at the back of our house the best."

"Never mind, Dot; you shall go into the country with me sometime soon, and we will stay a whole week; then you can listen to the birds sing, and pick as many flowers as you like."

"May I really go? Oh, you dear, good guardy. I do wonder if papa, who is in heaven now, can see how good you are to me?"

Hugh could not keep back the solitary tear that trickled and ran down his cheek. At first Hugh was worried about the keeping of this child, but on this day, if never before, he was thankful to his Maker for giving to him the orphan of his dear friend—Jim Harlan. Somehow the depth of her beautiful nature was becoming visible to the manly Hugh. She seemed to be older than her years indicated. As soon as Hugh's busy life permitted, he made good his promise and took Areta on a sojourn into the country. Here the child was in her natural element.

"It is like transplanting the wild rose from its natural surroundings into the artificial creation—the hot-house—to keep that child cooped up in the dirty city," thought Hugh, at the end of a week; the extreme limit of his vacation. He had not the heart to drag Dot back to the city so soon; so he asked her if she would like to stay a little longer without him.

"I would like to stay, but you might need me at home," she answered.

"Oh, don't let that worry you. I know I will miss you terribly, but I can stand it for a week." And when the lady of the house approved of the plan, and agreed to take good care of her, Hugh bid his little charge farewell and returned to the city and the duties of his office.

One day, shortly after Areta's return from the country, in accordance with a

promise to do so. Hugh took her through the great iron works. Many of the workmen stopped long enough to listen to the child recite some incident of her visit to the country.

"Oh, dear," exclaimed Areta when they came to the heating department, where the billets are heated to be sent through the giant rolls, "isn't it just awful for the poor men to have to stand in front of those awful fires; it would kill me. I think the rest that own this big mill ought to be good to them and give them heaps of money. Don't you, guardy?"

"Indeed, I do, little one," answered Hugh.

Of all the stockholders of the Valley Iron Works company, Hugh Vinton had the employes' interests most at heart. He was always in open dispute with other members of the firm in the interests of the men. Something for their comfort was his watchword; for Hugh was not always a rich man. At one time he stood side by side with the toilers of the great industries of the country, and contrary to the general rule of wealth and industry, he, the rule, having received his fortune, instead of refused himself to ownership, he did not forget his associates of the past. He usually agreed with Areta; for she, in her childish language, expressed his views exactly.

Another proof of his ward's generous nature occurred the next day after the visit to the mill. She was sitting on the porch talking to Hugh, as was her custom, over a small grill, opposite two years Areta's senior, came along the street. She looked at the number of every house as she came along. When she came to where they were, she stood from her pocket a dirty, crumpled piece of paper and compared it with the number on their house, as if to make sure Iain was right.

"This must be the place," she muttered to herself. Then aloud she asked: "Please, sir, is this where Mr. Vinton lives?"

"Yes, my little lady, that is my name; what can I do for you?"

"My son disappeared from your mill the other day because he had been drinking, and let a part of the machinery through the belt. He is so sorry now, and he promised mamma and I never to drink again if you would give him his job back again. We are so very poor now and need money so bad that I thought if you would come to you and ask you, maybe he could be taken back again. He's a very good boy, sir, and very kind, and that is why I came to you."

When the girl had finished her story Hugh asked her who her father was.

"Tom Harris," she replied.

"When was he drinking?"

"Last Friday."

"And are you really so poor?" asked Areta.

"Yes; we are very poor now. Papa always got good wages, but he spent so much for drink. He promised me and mamma he would never drink any more, and he's been all his wages after this."

"Good resolutions, if he will only live up to them," thought Hugh.

Arming that the child was brave and returning shortly, she put something into the little stranger's hand, saying: "Take that, and maybe it will help you."

The girl held up to her astonished gaze a shilling dollar.

"You don't care if I give it to her, do you, guardy? You know you gave her those ribbons; but I will go without the ribbon now."

"I must not take this," spoke up the girl. "Papa would not like it. He says we are the men addressed, "but you have yet to see the day when we will allow charity from you. You unless you take him back inside of one hour, every wheel in this mill will cease to turn until he is taken back."

"Here, girl, take your money and return shortly, she put something into the little stranger's hand, saying: "Take that, and maybe it will help you."

The girl held up to her astonished gaze a shilling dollar.

"You don't care if I give it to her, do you, guardy? You know you gave her those ribbons; but I will go without the ribbon now."

"I must not take this," spoke up the girl. "Papa would not like it. He says we are too proud beggars, and that he can work for his family. Oh, dear, I wish he would all be honest and keep from drink any more; and you will give him back his job, won't you, Mr. Vinton? Please, for mamma's sake, let let him have another chance," pleaded the girl.

"Oh, please do, guardy. I know he won't drink any more," added Areta.

"If I do what," said Hugh, "buy you the dollar Dot gave you, and buy a new one for your mother? Well, tell your father to be ready to go to work tomorrow morning. If he did job to-day, I will find him something else to do."

"I thank you, Mr. Vinton, and I will go and tell papa at once. Thank you, too, little girl; I will feel glad to kiss you both, to my poverty-stricken home."

Although only eight years old, on that night Areta Harrison knew her first strike in the cause of down-trodden, laboring humanity; for it was only a few days after Harris secured his old position again, and Areta was never more happy in her young life. And again Hugh Vinton thanked God for the day Jim Harlan left his daughter to his care, and in the years that followed he had more reason than ever to be thankful, as the following chapters will show.

CHAPTER II
THE STRIKE

Twelve years have buried themselves in the past, since the little auburn-haired girl, fresh from the Rocky Mountains, stuck her head in the doorway of the Valley Iron Works, and asked for Hugh Vinton.

Many changes have taken place in that time. The little girl of then was now a beautiful young woman of nineteen. The most extravagant anticipations of Hugh had been realized. Areta had graduated from college with highest honors. She loved the old, wild, free life still, successfully run, largely under the dictatorship of the secretary, but one month had blighted authority, and that was the president of the company.

A great many of Areta's spare hours were spent in the office of her guardian. She loved to watch the business methods of the gigantic iron market. Often she helped Hugh with the correspondence. She was fairly idolized by the wives and children of the toilers; she had been a pleasant one or a smile for them, no matter where she chanced to meet one of them; and many a dainty dish or tempting morsel was carried by her own hands to the sick room of the wife or child of one of her guardian's employes.

And Hugh; what of him? Well, he is just the same old Hugh, respected by all the men, and a friend to all the unfortunate. His hair, slightly sprinkled with gray, which if anything, gave him a nobler appearance.

But all is not harmony at the works; some of the officers and stockholders are not satisfied with Hugh's policy toward the men. Foremost of these is Harold Spencer, son of the former president, now deceased.

Young Spencer inherited all of his father's stock, which represented about one-fifth of the entire capital, and was equaled only by the stock held by Hugh. The balance was held by some fifteen or twenty other men prominent in the business world.

Hugh and Spencer were practically on the same footing, and as the favored Hugh's policy, and the others Spencer's, the company was divided into two factions.

Hugh still retained the secretaryship and in respect to his dead father, more than his ability, Harold Spencer was elected treasurer.

The president of the company was a hard-hearted man, always endeavoring to put the men down, and oftimes succeeding but these efforts. He was a firm admirer of the former president's son, and the pair were as heartily disliked by the men as Hugh was liked. This new president was not elected to the office on account of the stock he held, but the business ability he was supposed to possess. Several disputations between the owners and men had already been smoothed over by Hugh's influence, but again evil forebodings were discernible.

Hugh stood steadfastly in favor of the men, who wanted their union recognized by the mill owners. The president, Harold Spencer, and a half dozen others, refused to consider. A committee had been appointed to wait upon the officials with their request. This committee the president refused to receive.

"What right have you men to come here with any such trash as that?" he asked Jesse Hawkins, the new president. "Do you think I'm not going now to run this company's business? If you are not satisfied with the treatment you are receiving, I'm sure there's many another's son of you quit! Do you suppose we can't get plenty men to take your places? Well, we can. Don't come here again asking me to receive a committee with any union, for I won't put it to recognize any union; for I won't do it. I answer you once and for all, that I'll lose a thousand times. No! We, the owners of this mill, will have nothing to do with the union."

"What will you do if we are ordered out on a strike?" asked Jesse Hawkins on whom all this wrath was poured.

"Strike! Strike the devil! What do we care if you strike? Didn't I tell you we could get plenty more men to fill your places?"

"And do you suppose that we would allow a few men to turn until we get justice, were we ordered out on a strike?"

"No threats from you, sir, or I will discharge you from the office!" angrily.

"Do so, if you think best; for if you would ever see a man in this old mill would lay down his tools before an hour had passed over his head. You unless you take him back inside of one hour, every wheel in this mill will cease to turn until he is taken back."

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ever, I will try to find a trace of the Harlans of Stevens Gulch and if they can be found, and prove at all grateful for my service, I will hand in a nice fat bill.

"Now, I wonder who I can send to the Gulch? Maybe I had better go myself. I can't go tomorrow on account of that Smith case; but I can the next day, and that is just what I will do when I come to think of it. I may have a chance to get a nice slice of the Harlan money before I am done with this if I play my cards right. I am very glad you trusted this affair to me, Mr. Sampson, and day after tomorrow I go to Stevens Gulch to find the missing heir; and it will be something strange if I do not get a clew of the Harlans, and when Arthur Pierpont gets a clew of anything he wants, he follows it to the end if it takes him across the continent." Such were the reflections of the wise lawyer of Denver.

At the time previously set, the lawyer started on his journey, part of which would be by railroad, and the balance on horseback.

When he arrived at his destination, with a hopeful heart he set about making inquiries concerning the Harlans. Very few of the inhabitants could remember twelve years back. He came across one grizzly old mountaineer, who thought he could remember such a man.

"Do you know whether he is dead or alive now?" asked the lawyer.

"Well, if he be the one I think he be, it seems tee me he handed in his chips."

"You mean you think he is dead?"

"Spect that are about it."

"How about his wife?"

"Seems ter me ez if she kicked her pail first."

"Had he any children when he died?"

"Yep; or kid erbout six, I 'spect."

"Boy or girl?"

"Girl."

"What became of her?"

"Seems ter me ez if I hearn tell of her agoin' east or stay with some of her dad's people."

"You don't know what city she went to, do you?"

"I don't know ez I do; but you jest come up ter the house. 'Lize she do be good ter remember things, and I guess she would know all about it."

When the mountaineer's cabin was reached and Pierpont brought forth, the lawyer felt certain he had a better chance of success with her than her husband; for her appearance indicated to this man, who was a student of human nature, that she was one of the people who was always minding some one else's business better than her own.

"Law sakes, yes!" she exclaimed, in answer to a question asked her by her lord and master; "poor fellow, it was a pity he had to die and as his claim was beginning to pan out well."

"There was a child left, was there not?"

"Deed there was as fine a little lady as ever live in these parts."

"Do you know what was done with her when her father died?" questioned the lawyer.

"Now, you just look here, mister, before you go any farther, I want to know what you are driving at before I tell you any more, for if you ain't the girl's friend, I won't tell you another blamed word." And the woman drew herself up to her full six feet.

"Well, my good woman, you may judge for yourself whether I am friend or foe when I tell you her uncle, who resided in California, died recently, leaving her his entire fortune, in case her father was dead."

"Holy gee! Do you really mean that?" asked the woman.

"It is perfectly true," replied the man of the law.

"Then I will tell you anything you want to know right away, mister."

"I thought you would tell me all you knew, first of all. I want to know where she went to from here, unless you know the present whereabouts which would be better, of course."

"No, I don't where she is now; but when she left here she was in the care of one of the trainmen and sent to Philadelphia. I think they called the place Erie and I did hear people say as there was a powerful sight of people lived in the town; course I don't know, never received no letter from there."

The lawyer assured her that her information had been correct, as he knew there was a great many people lived in the city mentioned, and that he knew no more.

"Do you know who was to take her when she arrived in the city?" he continued.

"I don't know people say as that she was goin' to some chum of her father's."

"Do you know the name of such person?"

"No, sir."

"And there was no other children?"

"There was not."

The lawyer could learn nothing more from the woman, so he took his departure. "I have a clew of them, at any rate," thought the lawyer as he started on his way, "and I can do now is to advertise in the eastern papers, and if I have been not bring the desired results—well, then, to Philadelphia I go, as sure as my name is Pierpont."

Few days later, at the instance of the lawyer, a personal appeared in the Herald; and just one week after the date of appearance Mr. Pierpont received an answer to it. This was very brief and to the point:

"Philadelphia, Pa., August 25, 13—. Mr. Arthur Pierpont, Denver, Colorado.—Dear Sir: Am pleased to let know by return mail your reason for wanting to find a certain Arietta Harlan, daughter of James Harlan, deceased and at one time a resident of Colorado; may be able to assist you in your search. Respectfully yours—Harold Spencer."

"Ha, ha!" laughed the peer of the law, as he finished reading the letter. "The scent is getting warm, and it is about time for me to let my colleague know how the land lies. Folding the letter, and putting it away in a compartment of the desk, he picked up his pen and commenced to write:

"Denver, Colorado, August 29, 18—. Mr. Thomas Sampson, San Jose, California.—Dear Sir: Since I received your letter I have made a trip to Stevens Gulch in the interest of the Harlan will. I found that James Harlan died there about twelve years ago. His wife passed away previous to his demise; however, one child survived them; a child of six or seven, who I have reason to believe is now living in some of the large eastern cities. I am pretty certain I can find her by the use of considerable money. Kindly let me know to what limit I may go for such expense money. Yours respectfully—Arthur Pierpont."

When he finished this one he wrote another letter; this one he directed to the sheriff:

"Denver, Colorado, August 29, 18—. Mr. Harold Spencer, Philadelphia, Pa.—My Dear Sir: Answering yours of the 8th. If the identity of the Arcta Harlan you have reference to, can be proved, that she is the one we are in search of, she is heiress of a fortune of a few hundred dollars, left to her by her father's brother, William Harlan, of San Jose, California. If you know her present whereabouts, you will confer on us, as well as the young lady, a great favor by communicating the same knowledge at once. Any trouble you may be put to will be duly reimbursed. Awaiting your immediate reply, I remain, yours respectfully—Arthur Pierpont."

As the lawyer threw down the pen and sealed this last missive, he breathed a long drawn sigh of relief. "There, my job is finished; so all I can do is to wait, patiently wait, for the replies to these letters, and if indications do not prove very deceitful I will add at least five hundred to my already snug bank account. I wonder who this Harold Spencer is, and what interest he can have in the matter? I guess time will keep his ward, and produce both girl and proof of her identity; for the sooner this is settled the better it will be for all concerned."

This shrewd lawyer had a habit of talking his plans over to himself and in this manner he summed up the case for the consequence he was entitled to; and it would be hard to keep track of the number of times that he added the five hundred dollars he expected to get to his present bank account.

The answer to his professional brother's letter was the first to arrive, and he was very visibly excited as he tore open the envelope. In this excitement he tore off one end of the folded sheet inside. He spread it carefully on his desk and proceeded to read:

"San Jose, California, September 4, 18—. Mr. Arthur Pierpont, Denver, Colorado.—Dear Sir: Your letter at hand. I am glad to know you have made such good progress in the case of searching for the heiress. I will be perfectly willing to fix your limit to draw from to defray expenses at the sum of three hundred dollars; however, I trust you will use your good judgment, and make the bill as small as possible. Advise immediately on receipt of any additional information. Respectfully yours.—Thomas Sampson."

"Three hundred dollars be damned!" ejaculated the lawyer, in disgust. "I will drop the case right here before I will take less than five hundred, and I will tell him so right off." Suiting the action to the word, for some pettifogger working for the love of the profession, he began to write a reproachful letter to his mistaken ideas, of my name has escaped me. Arthur Pierpont, Esq." The indignant man grasped his pen and hastily wrote the following:

"Denver, Colorado, September 7, 18—. Mr. Thomas Sampson, San Jose, California.—Dear Sir: I am very much surprised to find you want me to give my services at such a low figure, and I mean to tell you just what I think.

The man stopped short here; because he did not know exactly what he thought, or if he did he did not know how to express himself. For some time he sat running his fingers through his hair, and thinking. At last he exclaimed aloud: "By jove! I have it. I will wait for waiting for an answer; I will just telegraph him, and that will be quicker than writing."

To think was to act with this crafty lawyer; so a little instrument ticked this message over the metropolitan wires to California city:

"Denver, Colorado, September 4, 18—. To Thomas Sampson, San Jose, California.—I will agree to your party you want for five hundred dollars (500), less. Answer at once.—Pierpont."

The proclaimed the author of the foregoing message, with an air of satisfaction. "I will make the girl worth more than a hundred, that that will bring him to himself in short order."

Nothing disturbed the slumbers of the wary lawyer that night, and he was at his office by the usual hour on the following day. He had been reading his morning paper about three hours, and was in the midst of a slow tread of the district messenger boy could be heard ascending the stairs. The door slowly opened and the uniformed lad of the profession entered the room.

"Message for Mr. Arthur Pierpont." This was his sole introduction.

"That's my name, give it to me, quick!" cried the lawyer. He reached for the yellow envelope; but the open delivery book was shoved into his hand, with, "Sign here, please," and Mr. Pierpont had to write his name in the book before he got the coveted missive in his hand; although he did say something that sounded like an oath to the boy. He spread the enclosed sheet out before him and read it. A smile overspread his face as he concluded. "Ha, ha! I knew it! It takes a Pierpont to bring a man to his senses in a matter of this kind." He read the answer a dozen times:

"San Jose, California, September 4, 18—. To Mr. Arthur Pierpont, Denver, Colorado.—Yours terms accepted. Make haste.—Sampson."

Arthur Pierpont tenderly folded the message sheet, and placed it back in the envelope, putting it in his inside pocket. Perhaps he wanted it to read in leisure moments while he was adding the five hundred to his bank account.

"Now, for the postoffice and, I hope, Spencer's answer," muttered the man to himself, as he closed the door behind him and descended the stairs to the street below.

He got the letter and opened, but the contents did not suit him at all. "Damn it!" he exclaimed, aloud, as he finished reading the following:

"Philadelphia, Pa., September 2, 18—. Mr. Arthur Pierpont, Denver, Colorado.—Dear Sir: In answer to yours of 8-29. I am sorry to say I am not able to comply with your request at present, but I am certain that I shall be able to find the party you want, as I sincerely hope the delay thus caused will not be additional trouble for you and I will promise upon my honor to find Miss Harlan for you. I will write to you as soon as I have found her, and remain communicating. Very truly yours.—Harold Spencer."

"Well," growled the recipient of the letter, "I suppose I can do nothing but wait for another week, at least, and that Spencer does not find her in that time—I—I why, I'll take a cent instead of five hundred dollars if I have to go clear to Pennsylvania and back myself for when a Pierpont undertakes to do a thing, he never says 'die,' and I am a true Pierpont."

Another instalment of this highly interesting story will appear next week. Readers should not miss it, as in that issue will find our splendid offer of free cameras and patterns on page thirteen and fifteen.

A Great Telescope.

The monster telescope at the Paris exposition which is to be 200 feet long and 26 miles, in three times the length of the largest one previously known, before telescope at Chicago. It is 197 feet long, 5 feet in diameter and weighs 1,339 tons. The mirror, the largest in existence, measure over 49 inches in diameter, and weigh 1,320 pounds. It is because of the difficulty in the way of making these monster lenses that the world has waited until the close of the nineteenth century for such an instrument. The process of making big lenses, which is described in the current number of Pearson's Magazine, has for nearly two centuries been a most jealously guarded monopoly of Paris. There is only one manufacturer of them in the world, M. Feil, the successor to successor of Guinaux, who, it is claimed, invented the process at the beginning of the present century.

Losing Heart.

Abner—Old man Tingler says the country is goin' ter smash. If things keep on as they have been goin'. He says he's resigned himself for the inevitable.

Jedediah—Yas; I understand that he hasn't writ a letter of advice ter McKinley for three months.

WOMEN! REMEMBER THIS.

In addressing Mrs. Pinkham you are communicating with a woman — a woman whose experience in treating women's ills is greater than that of any living person.

A woman can talk freely to a woman when it is revolting to relate her private troubles to a man.

Many women suffer in silence and drift along from bad to worse, knowing full well that they should have immediate assistance, but a natural modesty impels them to shrink from exposing themselves to the questions and probable examination of even their family physician. It is unnecessary. Without money or price you can consult a woman, whose knowledge from 20 years' actual experience is unequalled.

Women suffering from any form of female weakness are invited to freely communicate with Mrs. Pinkham at Lynn, Mass.

All letters are received, opened, read, and answered by women only.

This is a positive fact — not a mere statement — easily verified — thus has been established the eternal confidence between Mrs. Pinkham and the women of America, which has never been broken, and has induced more than 100,000 sufferers to write her for advice during the last few months.

Out of the vast volume of experience which she has to draw from, it is more than possible that she has gained the very knowledge that will help your case. She asks nothing in return except your good-will, and her advice has relieved thousands. Here are some of the cases we refer to:

A Woman who Doctored Eight Years and got No Relief Cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"Before taking the Vegetable Compound I was troubled with irregular menstruation, and suffered great agony. My physician gave me morphine, and I remained in bed. I doctored eight years and got no relief, and the doctors told me there was no relief for my trouble. Finally I tried Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. While taking the first bottle I felt that I was improving. I have taken seven or eight bottles, and never had anything to do me so much good. Every month my troubles have grown less and less, and now at this time I am cured." **Ella Quinney, No. 22 Stage Street, Haverhill, Mass.**

Another Woman Who Acknowledges the Help she has Received from Mrs. Pinkham.

"Dear Mrs. Pinkham — The doctor says I have prolapsus of the womb, and cannot help me. There is aching in the right side of abdomen, hip, leg, and back. If you can do me any good, please write." **Mrs. Nina Chase, Fulton, N. Y., November 20, 1897.**

"Dear Mrs. Pinkham — I followed your instructions, and now I want every woman suffering from female trouble to know how good your advice and medicine is. The doctor advised an operation. I could not bear to think of that, so followed your advice. I got better right off. I took six bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and used three packages of Sanative Wash; also took your Liver Pills, and am entirely cured." **Mrs. Nina Chase, Fulton, N. Y. December 12, 1898.**

Mrs. Voss cured of Periodical Pains and Perpetual Headaches by Following Mrs. Pinkham's Counsel.

"Dear Mrs. Pinkham — I have been suffering for over a year and had three doctors. At time of menstruation I suffer terrible pains in back and ovaries. I have headache, bearing-down day, and feel tired all the time. The doctor said my womb was out of place, and said I would be so glad if you could help me." **Mrs. Carl Voss, Sac City, Iowa, August 1, 1898.**

"Please accept my sincere thanks for the good your advice and Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done me. I did everything you told me to do, and used three bottles, and feel better in every respect." **Mrs. Carl Voss, Sac City, Iowa, March 23, 1899.**

Mrs. Pinkham has Fifty Thousand Such Letters as Above on File at Her Office -- She Makes No Statements She Cannot Prove.

THE WAGES OF SATAN.

Mystery of a Maiden's Birth---The Counterfeiter's Scheme---A Detective's Skillful Defense of a Girl's Estate.

By R. R. ROMANS.

Author of "Lured by Love," "Living a Lie," Etc.

(Copyrighted, 1900.)

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CHAPTER V.

Curled up in the corner of his seat, Jake Rawlston slept the sleep of the weary and worn-out. He did not awaken until the train was entering Macon, but the instant his eyes opened he remembered his duty. Feeling that he had dozed only a moment or two, he could not realize that his vision was correct when he saw the seat occupied by George and May no more.

"Where are we?" he asked a trainman, who was passing.

"Just entering Macon, sir."

"Great heavens! Then I must have been asleep the last five or six hours," he exclaimed.

"Very likely. Have you been carried by your station?"

"I have. Where did the gentleman and lady who occupied the seat across from me get off?"

"Indeed, I don't know. Ask the conductor."

Jake asked the same question of the conductor, whom he found in the smoker checking up his tickets.

"I didn't know they had left the train," answered the train official. They had ticked at Riverside. "Anything to say about them?"

"Well, I ain't sure," responded Jake, "but I was watching them to find out. I am a private detective from New Orleans."

"I will see if they are on the train," volunteered the conductor. He went back through and routed up all the passengers who were occupying berths in the sleepers, but the ones Rawlston sought could not be found.

"There is no telling where they left the train," said the conductor. "It might have been any one of several different ways we made since we left Meridian."

"Well, I suppose it's all my luck," growled Rawlston to himself, as he walked away. "If I hadn't got gay they wouldn't have dumbfooled me. I was after them, I must not tell the Colonel of that little slip of mine; he'll be mad enough as it is."

When Colonel Johnson arrived in Macon late that day, in response to the letter sent by Rawlston while on the train, he went directly to the telegraph office, expecting to receive a message from Rawlston, telling him he had gone. Instead of it, however, he received a note from Jake himself which read: "Come to the Central House."

Supposing his emissary had arrested May and had her in custody there, he bent his steps in that direction, confident the worst was over. In the hotel lobby he found Jake complacently puffing away at a cigar from which he seemed to be extracting a great amount of comfort.

"Where is she?" excitedly asked the Colonel.

"God only knows," answered Jake.

"What! Has she escaped you?"

"That's the way I figure it."

"How? Where? When? Damn it all, man, why didn't you follow her?" demanded the exasperated Colonel.

"Come, come, now, Colonel, take it cool. She's gone, and so far back that there is no use getting excited over the matter. Sit down and have a cigar while I tell you all about it."

"But we may be losing valuable time sitting here," persisted the impatient man.

"Wait for the story and then you can decide what is best to do. You see Carl and I went up to Meridian on the G. A. R. encampment on north, and I decided to stop over and look around the town a couple of days or two. Well, I was propped up against a pile of trunks when I saw a girl that looked like Miss Johnson step aboard the southern train. It was somewhat dark and I wasn't sure, but, thinking it my best bet to take a chance, I got aboard the train just as it was pulling out.

"I sauntered down through the car and soon found the lady I was looking for. Something had aroused their suspicions.

"Their?" interrupted the Colonel. "Who was with her?"

"Don't know his name; fellow I've seen in New Orleans. Saw him play an uncommon good game of billiards at the Crescent one night, and somebody said he was a reporter. That's all I know about him, except that I saw him on Canal street the night May skipped out."

"How does he happen to be with her?"

"Ask me something easier. As I was saying, something had aroused their suspicions, for she had a newspaper over her face and was pretending to be asleep. I recognized that queer ring you gave her some years ago, however, and knew I was on the right track. I asked the young fellow a civil question and he chopped me off pretty short.

"Well, I sat down in a seat right across the aisle from them and promised myself to stick to them until we got here and then I would work some scheme to get possession of her. At the first station I telegraphed you and thought the rest was easy. I guess that is where the trouble came in; it was too easy. The train was a fast one that made few stops, and as I had had no sleep for over forty-eight hours, I got to dozing, and finally fell asleep. When I awoke we were entering Macon and they were gone. Where or when they left the train no one could tell me. There is story, for what it is worth."

"You muttonhead!" thundered the Colonel. "Why didn't you inform the conductor and have an officer meet you at the first station?"

"Well, I suppose I should," admitted Jake, "but I didn't, and there is no use in getting mad about it."

But Colonel Johnson was mad and he cursed Jake Rawlston in a roundly as he thought he dare. Jake knew he was due to receive a good calling down at the hotel management, but he knew too much about the Colonel and his affairs to put up with more abuse than he saw fit to endure. He was a good man to handle "queer" money, and could pass it with a coolness that not any man in the gang, but when it came to playing detective he was signally at the most critical moment.

Colonel Johnson telegraphed for all his men he could meet there, and Jake and Jake immediately left for that place. When he had assembled them he explained Jake's story to them and then detailed men to watch all incoming trains on the roads to Macon. They were instructed to make the most diligent search for any one who was found she must be arrested at once on any plausible charge and held until the Colonel himself arrived.

Their efforts to locate the fugitives were fruitless. While Colonel Johnson's emissaries were scouring the country for information concerning May, she had slipped away out of their reach.

When George leaped from the train with May in his arms it seemed they were going down to instant and horrible death. It was but a few seconds, though to the actors, it seemed, they struck an obstruction that threw them to the ground just as the engine struck the trestle and partially beneath the track; then with a terrific crash it went to the bottom of the monarch of the woods that broke the force of their fall and finally stopped them entirely.

"Are you hurt?" asked George, still clinging tightly to his precious charge.

"No, I am not hurt, though I must confess I am somewhat overcome by the suddenness of it all. But you must have suffered some, as you sustained my weight when we struck the tree."

"It was surely remarkable, but I am not hurt in the least way as I remember. We were high up in the tree at this time. George was standing on the ground with May at his side, holding on lightly to a neighboring limb. The moon came out from behind a cloud and they could see the tower quite plainly.

"What amuses you?" inquired a smiling light in her countenance.

"The ridiculous figure we cut sitting up here. It reminds me of a pair of chickens going to roost."

His allusion seemed to meet May's approval, for she laughed merrily at it.

"Perhaps we had better get down," she suggested.

This was no easy task they found, however much easier than climbing up.

"I presume my hat is here on the grass somewhere," said George, and one was helped May to the ground. He hunted about some time before he found it where it had fallen after bumping through the tree.

"Are your clothes badly torn?" he asked.

"Yes, there are two or three small tears, but they don't show much and a few moments work will enable me to mend and fix them all right. I am presentable if you will be kind enough to wait."

"Good!" he exclaimed, with evident admiration. "You'll be adored a moment later. "Miss Johnson, I admire you more than ever. The past twenty-four hours have been a trial that few women could stand; but you appear none the worse, and eager for more experience. I am glad you are courageous; otherwise, I might fail, but with the aid you offer me I feel we can accomplish it," between us and our pursuers to make our task easier."

"I am glad you are pleased with me," she answered. "To be courageous and cheerful through these trials is all I can do to aid you, and when you are so kind as to interest yourself in my behalf it surely is my duty to aid you as much as I can. I have confidence in you, and whatever you ask me to do I will endeavor to accomplish."

"We must get away from here as soon as possible. That man might waken up any time and come back with officers looking for us. I hope we can get a train for the north very soon."

They found a footpath that led them from the wood in which they had fallen to the embankment where the two roads crossed each other. It was a steep, sharp climb, but they arrived at the top. Just up above them was the target and the towerhouse of the target master. George was careful that they were not seen and as they sat in the shadow for perhaps half an hour. Finally a headlight shot into view from down the track; the train was going south, but George was not to get aboard of it if possible, rather than risk waiting longer for a train going north. Any moment Rawlston might return on a handcar with a posse of officers.

Fearing the target-man might swing the block for the train without compelling it to stop, George cautiously crept over to where the target wires worked on a small pulley wheel. With the aid of a bolt he picked up by the side of the track he pried one of the wires off the pulley. Then he and May cautiously walked down the track and hid in the weeds.

On came the train, and finally it whistled for the target. The man in the tower tried to swing the block, but could not for the wire. After several attempts he climbed down to find out what was the matter. The train, with a heavy passenger, finding the block against it, slowed up and came to a stop with the train half over the crossing.

The conductor ran to the tower to learn what was wrong, only to find the target-man swearing because the block would not work.

"What are you holding us for?" impatiently asked the conductor.

"Go on," exclaimed the tower-man, "this wire has slipped off and the target won't swing."

The conductor waved his lantern and as the train started ahead he climbed on and resumed his duties. No one saw the young man and woman who had come from the platform of the train and who intended to board it, and only two people had any object in this was to have no one know they were in that vicinity that night.

Rawlston's detective's emissaries would be on his track the next day, and if they succeeded would give them such information then he and May would be that much the nearer to their journey's end.

Jake was asleep when George and May entered the train, and shortly after the clock that morning they landed in Mobile.

"It isn't where I started to go," said George to May as they were eating breakfast, but since we are here and have distanced any pursuit, I think we had better stay. I am afraid if we started north again that the train would take them somewhere. What is your judgment?"

"My judgment is of little account, because I have confidence in you," was all she answered. "You are kind enough to plan for me, and I will follow you with confidence if I antagonized your ideas Rawlston might in you and I would not advise me thus if she thought I would not be to you."

"That was kind of Miss Helen; I am glad she has such a good opinion of me."

She looked at him with an interesting expression upon her face.

"Pardon me," she said, "are you and Helen not sweethearts?"

"Sweetheart and I?" exclaimed George, in surprise.

"Why, no. We never met but once previous to night before last. That was in the forenoon during my flight."

"I know of that occurrence," replied May. "I felt very grateful to you for your kind attentions. "I thought perhaps you and Helen had been lovers, but had had a quarrel and had become lovers." She leaned her head dejectedly upon her two hands and smiled happily across the table at him.

"You seem pleased to learn that we are not lovers," he said.

"I am."

"Why?"

"Because."

"Then it is woman's reason," he answered, smiling; "but I am a man and cannot understand. Please give me a man's reason."

"Well," she laughed, "I will, then," impliedly and frankly: "I would soon hate you, were either of you for me. Helen, I have thought you loved her and was doing me favors because you wanted your pay." She blushed prettily and turned the conversation by asking, "What are we going to do here? You see I am entirely at your mercy since I find you are not under instructions."

"Quite right," he replied; "you certainly should be. I am not capable of giving future course of action. I will tell you my plans. I have a young ladies' seminary here; suppose we go down and register there as Mr. and Mrs. My sister, for the ensuing term. I will remain a bachelor and be near in case you need me. In that way I can keep in touch with what is going in New Orleans to assume such shape as to warn you of danger when danger becomes known."

"Splendid," she cried, clapping her hands. "But I have only the one dress," she exclaimed a moment later, while the smile died on her face. "I could not go and buy out a trunk full of clothes."

"Nonsense," he remarked, replied George. "Here is a roll of money Miss Lauvre gave me to keep for her. You can go and buy whatever you need. Have the package sent here to the house and we will get a trunk and pack them into it."

The forenoon was spent in this way and after lunch they visited the seminary where May was duly enrolled as a student and before evening had taken up her residence in the young ladies' hall.

"I must write and tell Helen how nicely we have everything arranged," she said, as George left her that evening.

"Very well," he answered, and neither of them supposed for a moment that the innocent letter information of their present happiness would bring them more trouble than they had yet experienced.

CHAPTER VI.

When the counterfeiters tossed Frank Morrison into the pool, and as they thought into the jaws of a sleeping alligator, the young detective gave himself up as lost. His lucky star was in the ascendancy, for the reptile proved to be the one he had shot the night before. His arms and legs were securely tied, but by supporting himself upon the body of the dead saurian he finally succeeded in reaching the low, marshy bank of the pool. He was overjoyed to find that his late assailants were nowhere in sight, but as he lay there in the swamp, unable to rise to his feet, he began to wonder if it would not have been more merciful had they shot him and thus saved him from a lingering death by starvation, so remote was the chance of rescue.

It was well toward evening when two negroes came along in search of the one who had attempted to slay Frank Morrison and who had lost his life when the counterfeiters captured the intrepid detective. Frank was nearly famished from hunger and exposure when he was found but he managed to tell them of the fate of the man they sought; then they returned the way they came and took the prisoner with them. He was taken in charge by an old black mammy, and through her skillful nursing and simple home remedies was able to return to the city the following day.

Colonel Johnson and his men were hunting for May up in the neighborhood of Meridian and there was no one for the detective to watch. In broad daylight he visited the neighborhood where he had left the high road and planned to go on foot, but his recent experience in that region made him wary, and he did not venture to explore it very far. The magnificent plantation of Colonel Johnson was the next farther down the road, but not knowing this he passed it by, and quietly contented himself with watching about the Colonel's mansion.

His quick eye soon discovered that a woman belonging to the Colonel's household was frequently visiting the negro cabin, and ever on the watch for someone, and ere the day was over he was convinced that in her vigilance was a beautiful young lady who lived in the adjoining mansion. Inquiry developed the fact that she was Miss Helen Lauvre, while her nemesis was known as Colonel Johnson.

Late that evening Miss Lauvre left the house, walked to the corner where the detective, and then returned. As she started down the street Mrs. Johnson quickly followed her, and the detective saw that she dropped a letter in the mail box, she quickly disappeared. In a few minutes a man appeared again and walking rapidly down the street dropped a letter in the box. Then she turned and looked about her to see if she was observed. The street was deserted and the gaslight over the box was concealed her in its shadow. She inserted a key in the box, opened it, took out the mail and examining the letters there, selected one which she placed in her pocket. Then she locked the mail box and returned home.

"Well, this is interesting," mused the young man, as he watched Mrs. Johnson enter the house. "Evidently the young lady has anything to do with the case I am trying to unravel? It isn't a question of neglect small details and in the absence of a better opportunity I will eavesdrop to find out what this means."

Some fifteen minutes later Mrs. Johnson reappeared, dressed for the street, and she carried a small hand satchel and seemed in a hurry. She walked rapidly down the street. The detective followed her under a short ride on a street car, and they brought up as a railroad station. Mrs. Johnson entered and at the ticket window purchased a ticket for Mobile. The detective followed suit and in a few minutes both were speeding in the direction of the gulf city.

Here was a new remotest idea what his clew would lead to, but as she was the wife of a prominent citizen, and the fiancee to be a counterfeiter, he judged that Mrs. Johnson had left her name 'Ella, and he hoped she would disclose some operation that could be used as evidence, or at least that by following her he would learn the names of members of the band.

The people of the Crescent City had made a great sensation over the elopement of Miss Johnson, for she was supposed to be and the Colonel made no remonstrance to them, speaking of it in that light. Frank Morrison had not known the young lady and, of course, knew nothing of the sensation. He had left Meridian as he left Colonel Johnson's motive for watching Helen Lauvre, before the Colonel's men and her subsequent hurried trip to Mobile.

He had received May's letter from the seminary, telling of her location and where she was. This letter Helen immediately received and it was in the answer that Mrs. Johnson secured from the mail box. Frank knew that Mrs. Johnson was Miss May Moore, did not disconcert her in the least, as he considered just the information she wanted and she started for Mobile to see if she was really there.

They arrived in Mobile the next morning and Mrs. Johnson got into a cab and Frank followed her to the railroad station. Her cab stopped at a street corner where stood a building, a young ladies' seminary, and when Morrison saw her alight from the carriage and walk down the street on the opposite side from the seminary building, closely inspecting the houses as she passed, he entered a boarding house neighborhood, for nearly every house had a sign of boarders in the window.

Directly opposite the entrance to the seminary Mrs. Johnson ascended the stairs of a house and rang the bell. The detective lottering along behind saw her ask the woman who answered her ring if they had rooms to let. Being answered that they had she entered, while the detective stopped at the next house and made the same inquiry, with equally good results.

"What does this mean? The gesture of this game yet," mused the young man, as he stood in the bay window of his room and watched the front door of the boarding house. "Patience, however, ought to have its reward, and I guess I am patient enough."

It was an all day wait, and as it became evident that she was not going out soon, he had them serve his dinner in his room. Toward dusk he was electrified to see a young man whom he knew cross the street and enter the seminary.

"Why, there is George Moore!" exclaimed the detective. "I haven't seen him

since we used to room together in Chicago before the world's fair. I must see him when he comes out of there even if I do miss Mrs. Johnson."

Fifteen minutes after George Moore and May came out of the seminary and walked down the street. In seemingly less than a minute Mrs. Johnson was out upon the street and there was no doubt she was following them.

"So that is what you came to Mobile for, is it?" commented the detective. "Well, I am anxious to see what you are going to new" and he quickly followed her.

George and May entered a music store some distance away and May purchased several pieces of music; then they quietly returned to the seminary. As soon as Mrs. Johnson saw them enter the door she turned and walked swiftly to a corner drug store in which was located a branch telegraph office. She sent a telegram and then returned to her room.

Frank Morrison approached the telegraph operator and displaying his badge, asked to see the message just sent. It read:

"Colonel Johnson, Meridian, Georgia.—She is here. Come at once.—Laura, 3565 Bixby boulevard."

"As much a mystery as ever," he mused. "I must see George Moore and find out what it all means."

He walked back to his room and as he was about to enter the house he saw George Moore leave the seminary and start down the street. He hurried his steps and soon they met at the corner.

"What are you up to?" demanded the detective, showing his unobtruding friend on the shoulder.

George stood guiltily, and then perceiving whom it was, grasped his hand and shook it heartily. "Frank, you're a surprise. Frank; where did you hail from?"

"New Orleans was my last stopping place. While engaged on a case there I struck a clew that brought me straight to you, and now I would like to tell me what it all means. I can't believe that you are mixed up in any devilry, but if you are you had better make a clean breast of it and then you can depend upon the law closes on the balance of the gang."

Really, Frank, I don't understand you. I am afraid of nothing that you could arrest me for."

"Who is the young lady you just left?"

"May Johnson."

"Any relation of Colonel Johnson of New Orleans?" asked Frank, an idea of the truth coming to him.

"His daughter."

"Ah! And you eloped with her?"

"Not exactly that, but I will tell you all, and then you will understand."

"Forget me not" dumbling you an instant," said Frank, when he had heard George's story. "You are the same generous, chivalrous boy I used to know. And now you will be glad to know Mrs. Johnson's letter to Miss Lauvre was the means of betraying you to her worst enemies. Mrs. Johnson intercepted Miss Lauvre's letter to Miss Johnson, and she came here immediately. I followed her and she is now waiting for the Colonel to come, when she evidently expects to gain possession of her daughter."

"Where is she now?" asked George.

"In a house just opposite the entrance to the seminary, and no doubt sitting by a front window watching the seminary door to guard against Miss May leaving it without her knowledge."

"Then that means that May must escape by the rear way. But it is now too late to see her. The seminary is closed after eight o'clock, and before morning the Colonel and his wife will have captured her. We must devise some plan, Frank."

"Oh, that can be arranged," said the detective. "What time are the lights supposed to be out?"

"Nine o'clock."

"Well, I'll tell you. We will go in the rear way. I have a bunch of skeleton keys, so it will be very easy."

About half-past nine the two young men scaled the back fence from an alley and Frank opened the basement door. "Now you lead the way," he whispered to George.

They slipped along like a couple of burglars, and George could not help wondering what would be the consequences if they were caught. In a few minutes they had reached the hallway that led to May's room. She had told George its number and he was glad now that she had done so, although at the time he had no idea how useful the information would prove.

The corridor was dimly lighted, but by the aid of the flickering gas jet he found the number he sought. Frank then turned out the light while George rapped lightly on the door. It was some time ere he was able to make May hear, as he had to be doubly cautious, for it was just as easy to waken some one else.

May had not been in the school long enough to make many acquaintances, so she could not understand what the cautious rapping at her door portended. Finally she recalled several of the girls had decided to make a "moonlight call" in order to get acquainted, and she cautiously unfastened and opened it a trifle.

"Who is there?" she whispered.

"It is George," came the answer.

"George!" she gasped, incredulously.

"Yes," he said, reassuringly.

"What is wrong?"

"Nothing, but I'm tracked here. You must get ready to leave at once."

"And run away?"

"Pack your large valise. We have no time to spare."

She closed the door and for nearly a half hour there was the subdued sound of something moving in the room. Finally she came forth; a large valise in her hand.

"I have it with me, I assure ta," cautioned George, and then he introduced them.

"We'll know each other better when we meet outside," suggested Frank, as he reached for her valise. "It is so dark you had better let George assist you."

Quietly the trio slipped down the stairs, out through the back yard into the alley.

"Where are we going this time?" asked May, as they walked along, having reached the street.

"To Florida," said George.

"Florida?"

"Yes; the City of Charleston from New Orleans leaves here at eleven-thirty for Apalachacola, and I think it would be the best course to pursue. No one would think to look for us there and we can stay until you are ready to return. You can send a letter to Miss Helen by my friend, Frank Morrison, here, and thus there will be no chance for them to trace us."

"It would be best," urged the detective. "You know, Miss Johnson, I am a United States secret service man, and I am engaged on a case which may make some peculiar revelations when it is finished. May I ask you some very pointed questions?"

"Certainly," answered May, with a curious air.

"How long have your parents lived in New Orleans?"

"About eighteen years."

"You do not remember where you lived previously?"

"No. I was but a little over a year old when we came to New Orleans. New York is where we used to live."

"How did your parents treat you previous to this affair?"

"With the greatest of kindness until Jack Shepard appeared."

"Jack Shepard is quite a familiar name to me. Is he a friend of your father's?"

"Yes."

"May I ask if you love your parents?"

"I do not hesitate to say that I positively believe they are my parents."

"Well, if my theory is correct, they are not."

"Why do you say that? Do you know anything about them or of me?"

"I know that Colonel Johnson is a dangerous law-breaker; I think his wife is also.

"I hope to discover that you are not their daughter. Now, here we are at the steamer, I will bid you good-by, and return to my original case in New Orleans, but I will endeavor to soon fix things so you may come out of hiding."

"Will you take a note to Miss Lauvre?" asked May.

"Willingly."

George gave her a piece of paper torn

With a shriek of terror she jumped overboard.

from a blank book and she hurriedly penciled a few lines to Helen to apprise her of the latest developments; then they hurried aboard the vessel which was about ready to leave.

As they walked down the long cabin to the state rooms assigned them, May gave a sudden start and grasped George's arm.

"What is it?" asked George.

"Jack Shepard," she whispered. "He started to come out of his state room, but when he saw me he dodged back. Can we not leave the boat?"

"No; it is too late now. Perhaps he did not see you."

"But he did."

"Then we must leave this boat at the risk of our lives. We are some distance from the shore already, but I'll swim over one of the boats unseen we can escape."

Instead of entering their cabins, they went immediately upon deck and George examined the life boat that swung at the stern of the steamer. He untied the ropes by which it was lowered and gave them a turn around one of the seats so he could easily control the weight and then helped May in and stowed her valise in the bow.

Just as he commenced to lower the boat, Jack Shepard's face appeared over the rail of the steamer. Perceiving that they were about to escape him, he bounded over the rail and landed in the boat. His body struck George and caused him to lose control of the boat tackle; the loosened ropes spun through their pulleys and the boat struck the waves with such force that George was thrown overboard.

Shepard was upon his feet in a moment and his evil eyes flashed with pleasure when he saw May was left with him. George recovered himself the instant he struck the water, and with long, strong strokes reached the boat. Grasping hold of the stern he began to climb in, when Shepard perceived him. The villain seized a heavy oar and struck him back into the waves.

May was frozen with horror at his act.

"You are mine now," he cried, attempting to grasp her around the waist.

With a shriek of terror she eluded him and jumped overboard; the dark waters swept over her, while Shepard peered over the side of the boat at the spot where she went down.

This dramatic and thrilling story will be continued next week. Anyone desiring to subscribe for the Ledger is respectfully referred to our advertisements of free cameras and free patterns on pages thirteen and fifteen.

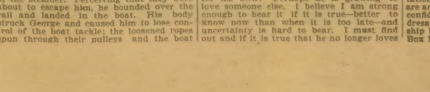
A DANGEROUS GAME.

"Carl, I don't believe you truly love me."

Mildred Reynolds looked at her lover half archly, as if she dared him to say he did not love her, half-pleadingly, as if she longed for him to contradict her warmly.

Carl Langlois reddened under her gaze. "What nonsense, Mildred, of course I love you. Why else would I come a hundred miles to spend an evening with you?" he replied, a trifle impatiently.

"Then, why,"—Mildred began bravely, but she in turn colored and looked embarrassed. Surely Carl knew that she longed to ask him why he had twice postponed their marriage, and on this visit, when she had expected him to ask her to set the day for the ceremony, he had not done so. True, he had brought her a beautiful bracelet and



had scanned affectionate and loving; yet somehow Mildred felt that there was something lacking in his caresses, and the fact that he did not broach the subject which she had hoped he would settle on this visit vaguely alarmed her. For she loved Carl deeply and was unhappy in the home of a relative upon whom she was partly dependent and longed to have a home of her own.

Carl had said, the last time he had visited her, that they would arrange their plans for the future when he next came, but, when Mildred had made the remark had not let her believe he really loved her, he was on the verge of departure and still had not asked her to name the day which would make them husband and wife. He must have known what the question was she wished to ask, yet he did not help her out, and so the question died, unasked, upon her lips. Instead, he turned suddenly to the clock. "I'll have just time to make the 9:30 train if I start now," he said to my sweetheart. Give me a kiss and take good care of yourself, dear, till we meet." So certain was Mildred that for a time all doubts as to his fidelity were dismissed from Mildred's heart. Only for a time, however, for while his farewell kiss was still warm on her lips, the question returned to her mind:

"Why does not Carl, if he truly loves me and wants me to be his wife, claim me for his own? Perhaps he is growing to love someone else. I believe I am strong enough to hear it if it is true—better to know now than when it is too late—and uncertainty is hard to bear. I must find out and if it is true that he no longer loves me as he did I will release him. But if I have wronged him by my doubts I will atone by giving him added love and affection."

Carl's mother had often sent her kind messages, and had also sent, by Carl, some very beautiful table linen for Mildred to embroider for her use after her marriage. She knew that Mrs. Langlois was the friend, although they had never met, and determined to go to see her and discover whether Carl had confided in her any change in his desire to marry Mildred. She shrank from the task, but it must be yet made for the sake of her future happiness. Several days after Carl's departure she paid a visit she took a trip to his home, arriving there, as she had planned, when Carl was absent at his business. When she introduced herself to Mrs. Langlois she was warmly greeted, but when she told the object of her visit her host was visibly surprised and disconcerted.

"My dear child!" she exclaimed, "there must be a mistake somewhere. Carl assured me, or by yesterday, that you kept putting him off whenever he mentioned your marriage. I cannot understand it."

"I can, Mrs. Langlois," said Mildred, proudly. "Carl has grown tired of me and is seeking in some way to free himself. But, dear heart, my fetters are not yet rivetted, and are easily broken. I will release him from an engagement which is no longer a pleasure to him."

"Carl is much to be pitied," begged his mother, "do not speak so bitterly. I am sure there is some misunderstanding."

Mildred, however, returned home and an overwhelming conviction that Carl was false to her came upon her with crushing force, but she summoned up courage to write him:

"We must find out," she said, very gently, "if we have been mistaken in each other as great, whether he is attentive to some one else. Have you ever noticed his taking particular notice of any young lady friend here?"

"Oh, no," Mrs. Langlois replied, hastily, but suddenly her face changed, "Surely, she said, to herself, for she knew the card for Marion Reed? And yet, now that my mind is drawn to it, I have noticed his often with her. But Marion is such a gay little flirt, and then she knew of Carl's engagement——

"Ah!" Mildred said quickly, "that is not enough to keep some girls from trying to win away a man's love. It may be that she has drawn him away from me. But, we must make sure, my dear friend—for I feel that you are my friend—and, if it is true, I will willingly give him up to her if it is for his happiness."

They agreed that Mildred's presence in the house should be kept a secret from Carl, and that Mrs. Langlois should invite Marion to tea with her. But Marion is such a gay little flirt, and then she knew of Carl's engagement——

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"Isn't she, mother?" he cried, enthusiastically, "the most charming girl I ever met."

"Carl," his mother said, gravely, "that is not the way for a man, soon to be married to another woman——"

"Pshaw, mother!" Carl exclaimed, impatiently, "you know I told you Mildred would never set the date and we have not been married at all."

"You are right, Mr. Langlois," said Mildred, who had been unable to resist the temptation to overhear what Carl was saying. "We never will be married. You are quite welcome to ask the fascinating Miss Reed to be your wife, for I am henceforth a stranger to you."

Before Carl could recover from his astonishment she was gone, and as her train was just ready to start she was out of all reach and the passionate protests of affection which he was poured, in vain, the promises of future fidelity, were never uttered.

Now that he had lost her Mildred appeared to Carl as a precious treasure, which he would have given his life to retain. The protestations of Marion Reed paled into insignificance and he took the first train for Chicago, hoping that he could win her back.

But once assured of the flaws in her idol Mildred had cast him out of her heart, and though she was not free to marry him because she realized his unworthiness. She refused to let Carl find refuge in her love unread. Within a week, mortified at his rejection, Carl was married to Marion Reed.

"Why, you're going to marry some girl in Lawrence," she replied, opening her blue eyes wide.

"No, I am not," he said, shortly. "I am going to marry you if you will have me."

"Why, Carl Langlois!" she cried, decidedly, "I was only amusing myself with you, dear boy, I hope your heart is not broken," she added, mockingly, for rumors of the true state of affairs had reached her ears.

"Flirting is sometimes a dangerous game, my friend," she added, "for I am a novice at sweetheart at the other end of the line," she answered, archly. And with her mocking laughter ringing in his ears, Carl realized that he was punished for his folly, by which he had lost that greatest of gifts—a woman's love.

Johnny Get Your Gun

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"They sat and held hands all the evening."

"How silly!"

"Oh, I don't know. You have to in whist."

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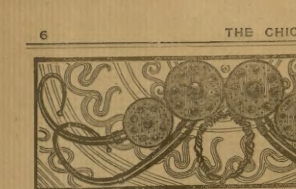

THE BLACK DAGGER.

Story of the Strange Mascot Mystery---The Fire of Human Hearts --- Who Killed Lord Basil?

By T. C. HARBAUGH.

Author of "A Sinner at Bay," "Man in Gray," etc.

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CHAPTER XXI.
A BAFFLED DETECTIVE.

The black dagger had vanished!

The secret drawer in which Valerie had placed it had failed to yield it back to her when she went to show it to Donald Black, the detective, and the pale girl, overcome with emotion and fear of another dark mystery, had fallen senseless at the trail-er's feet.

When she had come back to herself and sat in the arm chair at the desk with her gaze riveted upon the safe, the doors of which the detective had closed, Donald said:

"Let us keep this matter to ourselves. There is no necessity for making any fuss over the disappearance of the black blade. It will turn up again."

"Terribly so, I fear."

"We shall see. You have lost the dagger, but we have the pearl button," and the detective smiled.

"I cannot imagine who took the dagger," said Valerie.

"We will know."

"And soon, I trust."

It was late when Valerie sought her room and she did not retire at once.

She was still in a tremor over the events of the last few hours, though glad that she was back in Masters Hall after escaping the machinations of Sir Reginald Henlow.

As for Donald Black, he did not keep his apartment long.

While night outside was not very inviting, for the air was cold with threatened mist, he made his way to the garden and walked toward the Fernery beyond which stood the gamekeeper's cottage.

He was not seeking Masterson, though he knew he would have avoided the young man if he had crossed his path; the detective was out for a little stroll and more.

Presently there appeared down the finely graveled walk a step, at sound of which he drew to one side and hid.

Myriads of stars lit up the sky and showered soft light on shrub and shed.

Moreover, the night was full of sounds, for the hunt one was distinctly heard, and the London detective waited among the bushes with a good deal of curiosity.

The carriage came nearer and a smile overspread the man's face when he thought he recognized Mascot.

At last a darkish form came into view and the ferret leaned forward.

Barely five feet away stopped the maker of the footsteps and Donald Black beheld the well known shape of Hugo, the hunchback.

The little imp of darkness had quitted his room in the Hall and was abroad like himself.

His peculiar looking cap, terminating in a peak, was pulled down over his brows, and he craned his neck down the walk as if looking for some one.

"Be he trailing me?" Donald asked himself.

Pretty soon the figure moved on again and the detective saw it vanish down the walk.

Black was about to follow when it came hopping back.

"Not at home," he heard Hugo say. "I wonder if Lady Judith drove him away with her wild talk? Good riddance if she did; ha, ha."

It was a cold, heartless laugh, and the little man stopped almost within reach of the detective's arms and laughed again.

"It can't last long this way," he went on. "She refused to lend me a few pounds out of her fortune and laughed when I told her that I'd take the dagger talk."

In another moment Hugo hopped toward Mascot Hall and the detective lost sight of him for the second time.

Donald Black now walked down the path and stopped in front of the lodge.

He penetrated to its steps and found it dark and silent.

He wondered where Masterson was, and for a moment thought of knocking and finding out for himself if the young man was really at home.

As he was on the eve of carrying out his thoughts the front door of the lodge opened and some one came out.

Black had barely time to draw back among the bushes that fringed the walk when he caught sight of the person before him.

A woman stood before him, a woman who wore a close-fitting garment which did not interfere with the movements of her limbs. She looked strangely tall in the starlight and Donald Black studied her as well as he could.

Who was this person?

He was certain that Valerie was not paying a clandestine visit to the abode of her lover; he had heard her say that she was tired and frightened over the discovery of the loss of the black blade, and that she would seek her couch and try in slumber to compose her nerves.

For some moments the apparition stood for the detective's inspection and then came toward him.

He had heard of Lady Judith of Trevors; he had heard Valerie speak of her and of the meeting on Wild Judith's grounds; he knew that the woman had infatuated old Lord Mascot, and other stories about her.

Was he looking at her now?

And why this nocturnal visit to Masterson's abode?

Evidently she had found the lodge empty.

Donald Black studied her a little closer as she walked past him so near that he could have touched her with little effort.

He noticed the riding hat she wore, the gloved hands, one of which seemed to be holding something along the dark sleeve, perhaps a tiny riding whip; he noticed, too, the impalpable cloud of hair that shaped beautiful woman, her whole carriage; nothing that they recalled escaped the Ferret's eye.

His gaze followed her till she disappeared like a specter. He listened intently till the last echoes of her footsteps died away and called him back to the present.

This creature must have been Wild Judith, but why her visit to Masterson's shed, hour?

Surely Masterson was carrying on no intrigue with her.

Donald Black thought he had sifted the young fellow's character. He carried his heart on his sleeve for all to read it. He loved Valerie, he was not false; he was not a double dealer; there was nothing of the deceiver in his composition. Black believed the general belief that he was a gamekeeper's son and that his blood stood better than old Joyzlins, in his veins.

No, Masterson was not toying with Valerie. He would not compromise the sacred visit from Lady Judith; in no such manner would he compromise the sacred position in which Valerie trusted.

Donald Black thought of these things while the footsteps of the strange woman died away up the graveled path.

She had come to the lodge for a purpose; for evil of some kind she had left Trevors Hall, some burden had been handed to her.

At last the detective walked away toward Mascot Hall.

He could not dismiss Judith, if he had ever known her, from his thoughts.

Some new evil portended; some newer excitement was on the eve of development. What it was he did not know.

He found the Hall nearly wrapped in darkness.

A slight wind stirred the firs near the house and the cedars on the spacious lawn.

Suddenly there stepped from a dark spot the same figure he had seen near the gamekeeper's lodge.

Donald Black stopped at once.

Wild Judith again!

This time he was not so near the phantom, but he could make out a little more than the bare outlines.

"I'll see what this means," he inwardly exclaimed. "I'll find out if I can what this night visit implies."

He stepped forward, his foot breaking a twig on the walk as it ground it against the gravel.

That instant there was a sharp ejaculation, a quick start and a sudden flight.

Donald Black started after the fugitive, but all at once he brought up against a heavy bush, the location of which, not being familiar with the grounds, he was ignorant, and he went down in a heap.

Quick as flash, however, he was on his feet again, but it was too late now.

The quarry was gone; further chase was useless and Donald Black, not a little crestfallen, turned toward the mansion and slipped to his rooms.

CHAPTER XXII.
THE CRY IN THE NIGHT.

Max Masterson missed his visitor by a few minutes.

He had barried in the lodge a while longer she might have encountered the young game-keeper, but, as it was, they did not meet.

"I wish I could find what became of certain parts of the body. I will not call him father any longer, used to have. He kept them in the cellar, I searched there over and again; but I can't lay my hands on them. I will go over the lodge again tomorrow and see if I can't turn them up."

In a short time he went to his little room and retired. Donald Black was chasing the woman in brown and falling into the shrubbery.

The detective was not yet asleep when a cry that caused him to spring out of bed and thence to the window.

There he listened with all his might, but all for naught.

"That was a human cry!" said he.

He hastened to dress in the hall and thence to the broad stairway.

The house was awake by this time, but in a little while the detective heard a door open and some one coming down the hall.

As he turned he caught sight of a female figure in the corridor and the next moment he stood face to face with Mrs. Nolan.

The old care-taker was quite white and trembled.

"You heard it?" she exclaimed, halting before the detective. "It was just falling asleep and—"

"Do you mean the cry?" interposed Black, "for, see, I was down there, somewhere near the river where the sharp rocks are."

"What could you like to mean, Nolan?"

"The death cry of some one. I never heard that sound before in all the last ten years ago when we found the body of the gamekeeper's predecessor dead on the rocks."

"Killed?"

"Killed, with its head crushed. Are you going down?"

"Yes."

"I wonder if Valerie heard it?"

"Let us hope not. She sleeps in the other corridor and is some distance from here, you know."

"I hope she didn't hear it. It would frighten her so," said Mrs. Nolan. "But you don't know the way to the rocks. I would better come with you and show you the way, you."

"A good suggestion, Nolan. I'll act upon it," and the detective darted down the steps and out of the mansion.

As rapidly as he could he made his way down the paths to the lodge and rapped on the door.

In a moment he was answered by Max Masterson.

"What's up, Black?" exclaimed the young man, as soon as he recognized the detective.

"The cry for help. Did you hear it?"

"I was sound asleep, and, then, the wind might not be my way," was the answer.

Mrs. Nolan, who heard it, too, said the sound seemed to come from the Rocks."

"Did Valerie—"

"I don't think the girl heard it at all," interrupted the detective. "We might go down to the tragic spot and investigate."

"It's a rough, wild place and one is likely to slip without a light. I'll get a lantern."

Masterson went back into the lodge and soon came forth with a lighted lantern.

"Now, we're off," said he. "The Rocks, as we call the spot, has been the scene of one tragedy and if another—"

"Hark! What's that? The same cry again, but fainter!" exclaimed Donald Black.

The repetition of the cry in the night was enough to send the two men away at a rapid pace, Masterson leading, and in a little while they neared the river.

The banks which they approached were quite precipitous and at the water's edge, a lot of rough rocks had been tumbled as if from a giant's stone house. Over some of these the waters splattered and hissed, and at nearly all times they were spicy.

"Cautious now," said Masterson, looking back at his companion as he lowered himself over the top of the bank. "A misstep is liable to throw you headlong into the water and the stream just here is dangerous."

Donald followed the lantern which he saw bobbing ahead of him, and by extreme caution both men lowered themselves and at last stood at the foot of the embankment.

A strong wind was blowing.

"What do you see?" asked the ferret.

"Nothing yet," as Masterson swung his light. "I'll get a little closer. Wait! By George! There is something out yonder on the big rock!"

The agile young man clambered over a number of the slippery boulders and at times, but for his lantern, was lost to the detective.

"I see him plainly," he called to Donald Black. "It is my soul! It is Hugo!"

"Impossible!" said the detective, yet at the same time he was willing to admit that nothing was startling at Mascot Hall, "how in the name can you can't endanger your own life for that of the imp of darkness?"

Masterson pushed on and presently he called to the detective to lend a hand.

He was pulling something human in shape over the cutting stones, and Donald who hurried to his assistance saw that it was a hand and helped him up with his find.

"Hugo! Yes! What's the matter with that?" cried Masterson, depositing his burden on the wet, gravelly bank. "Hurt, Hugo and no mistake!"

The lantern showed that the young man spoke truth for Donald Black, bending over the inanimate object on the bank, recognized the face which was the hunchback's gems.

Yet another quarter of an hour the waters would have broken the poor wretch's hold, and he would have been swept down the river, said the young gamekeeper.

"He couldn't have fallen from the bank

"No; Hugo knows every foot of it," was the reply. "His clothes are torn, and up yonder is a trail which shows that he was tossed from the bank. Don't you see where he still nodding down on the identity right upon the rocks?"

The waving of Masterson's lantern showed the detective that he was right, and in a moment Donald turned upon the little misshapen object on the ground.

"We've got him to my room and then we'll see how badly he is. There's life in the imp yet, and he may be able to tell us what has happened."

The detective took the light and Masterson lifted the head over one of his broad young shoulders and went up the bank with his burden. It was quite a long journey to the game-keeper's lodge and Max held his burden on his own couch.

"Hugo knows a deep secret," said Donald Black, eagerly, as they worked with the unconscious man. "We must know why Hugo made the acquaintance of the Rocks."

"It is, of course, if he'll tell us," was the reply.

For nearly thirty minutes and after the application of all the means at their power, the eyes of the little hunchback opened to the outer world.

When he saw the light and caught sight of those who bent over him he shrugged his

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distorted shoulders and tried to rise. The first attempt was not successful; but the second fared better and the detective and Max drew back and let him get upon his feet.

"Vengeance and death!" he cried, darting toward the door, but the hands of Masterson caught him and held him gently.

A strange cry of baffled victory pealed from the hunchbacked's throat and he drew back and glared at the two rescuers.

"You're with friends, Hugo," said Max. "We pulled you off the Rocks awhile ago. How came you there Who tossed you over the bank?"

A tigerish fierceness lit up the limp's eyes. "Hugo knows, ha, ha!" he exclaimed. "It shall be his secret till the end! Vengeance and death! That's the cry now," and before Masterson could further detain him, he had leaped away like a roebuck and was gone.

CHAPTER XXIII.

OVER THE TRANSOM.

"I nearly wish we had let the fiend drown," said Max Masterson, when Hugo had cleared the distance and was limping and racing up the walk as fast as his limbs could carry him.

"No; it's best as it was. We shall know Hugo's secret before long."

"Do you suspect him of the murder in Mascot Hall? You recollect that you said in London that the murderer would be solved right here, that the crime was committed here and the proof must be found in Kent."

"I say that yet," said the detective, with positiveness.

"Do you think Hugo knows?"

"I am not quite prepared to answer that question, for he is as wary as the fox and has gone to his den, think you?"

"There is no telling. I would like to know who threw him from the bank."

"He has an enemy."

"He has no friends, I believe."

"Yet he may not be as black as he is painted."

"Come, don't try to unpaint the little devil because of compassion. Hugo is without a conscience. You remember how he tried to impress you with the suspicion that I was the murderer?"

"Of course I remember his course. He told Valerie the same."

"Tried to poison her mind against me! I almost wish I had let him remain on the sharp stones till the waters completed the work of his enemy. He will be sent to More news tomorrow, perhaps. What, are you going to try a little sleep?"

"If I can get some," smiled the detective, and a moment later he bade Masterson good night.

When he reentered the mansion he found White-Eared Mrs. Nolan waiting for him.

"Hugo came in a minute ago," said the old caretaker. "He looked like a ghost."

"No wonder."

"What has he seen?"

"The shadow of death. But go to bed, Nolan."

"Not while that imp of darkness is wide awake.

"Where is he?"

"He went up the back stairs to his rooms [illegible]."

"Where are they, Nolan?"

"The old lady located, Hugo's habitation for the detective and then consented to retire.

When she had vanished Donald Black made his way to the rear stairway and moved up it cautiously. He was fairly familiar with the mansion, having gone over it carefully during his first visit after the tragedy, and now he thought he knew enough to find Hugo's room.

When he reached the last floor a light over a door attracted him and he moved thither.

Donald Black had the step of the panther and secret, second to breathe while he advanced.

There was a narrow transom over the door, as there was over all the portals in Mascot Hall, and it was through this that the light streamed.

Finding himself balked by a well-stopped keyhole, the next thing the detective did was to draw himself up by catching hold of the cross-piece over the door, and looking into the room through the not over-clean glass of the transom.

In the middle of the chamber into which he gazed sat Hugo, the hunchback, applying liniment to his many bruises while Ro very flashed like a wounded serpent's, and his tail lashed in angry gratification.

Now and then a growl passed the welded lips and the hunchback would sometimes stop to stroke the table with his hands, nearly overturning the liniment.

Diabolism laughed in Hugo's eyes and all the revenge of his evil nature bubbled into life.

At last he stopped for good, corked the bottle and tossed it upon a pile of rags in the corner of the room.

Then he dragged himself back and forth over the table that liniment seemed to eat its way into the tenderest parts of his system, and all at once he halted and pulled something from a niche in the wall.

"The black dagger!" mentally cried the watching detective. "I now know who robbed the steel safe."

Hugo held like a fiend while he felt the needle-like point of the terrible weapon. He held it up in the light and admired the flash of the dark jewels in the hilt, and again drew the edge over his large thumb or chiseled the hilt with devilish glee.

"It never quits me now!" he suddenly cried. "The dagger belongs to and the poetical legend which the old Indian lapidary traced on the blade's blade shall be carried out to the letter. A man is doubly armed who possesses this death blade of the Nabob. He must kill and kill until the whole world swims in blood! I wonder if the little one misses it? he laughed again. "She put it away in the big safe, but Hugo knows how to open it and he took it when she was in London. And the tracker—the man who put me through an examination which he thought was in the interest of Justice, Justice! Ha, ha! You didn't find the waters very warm tonight, Master Hugo of Tartarus! And the young fool saved your life—for what!"

Hugo shook himself like a dog and showed his discolored teeth in a grin.

"He simply saved you for more work," he went on when he had caught his breath. "Max Masterson thinks he is going to make the young girl his own; but he counts without his host. And he really pulled you off the rocks, Hugo. Do you know that? Not only your rival. That's queer. And you didn't stop to thank him. Can't be. And that half-Jew he hired the dagger on him, 'if this had been in my hands, I would have killed him!' "

The fiendishness with which the last sentence was spoken nearly caused the cool detective to loosen his hold and drop to the floor.

"Wait! This is the panacea for more hurts than I got tonight," the dwarf suddenly continued, "and then—then—that silence! still, and, while it avenges, it clears the way to love. Ah, my sweetheart, your hands were cruel tonight, but I know the secret that can break you, the secret which can make all the rough places smooth. It is time for Hugo to act. And with this little dagger, with its beautiful legend, I go to triumph, ha, ha, ha!"

The black dagger was replaced in the secret niche in the wall and Hugo made ready for bed.

Donald Black saw him throw himself upon his pallet, where he lay perfectly still and from the dim light which illumined the room, he claimed him asleep, the man from London dropped from the transom and left.

"What a world of deviltry is concealed in that little body," he mused Black. "Hugo may not be the murderer of Lord Mascot but he knows, and he shall tell me before long."

Such was the detective's self promise as he passed downstairs, and found in a little while he, too, had sought his couch.

When morning came and light in the house he encountered Valerie on the porch.

The young mistress of Mascot looked more beautiful than ever. The sleep of sickness had come back to her cheeks, and she was getting her old color back from the previous night.

"Yet the torment she saw the detective she came forward and held out her hand.

"I hope you slept well, Mr. Black," she exclaimed. "I thought once that I would cry in the night, but it must have been a dream, that cry. I hope it was. Let us hope that our fears are not harbingers of evil. Master Masterson has gone to Dover. I know nothing but sunshine."

"That will do for me, my heart," replied Donald Black; but he could not help recalling the scene of the night before, and the dark figure which had come through the black dagger, and his hot, impetuous, threatful words once more rang in his ears.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FAIR TIGRESS OF TREVORS GRANGE.

"There! Take that, you brute! How dare you come into my presence with such words?"

The menial who heard these words slunk to the further side of the sumptuous chamber and cast the weapon to the floor.

He was a menial in more than name and the haughty woman who faced him stood in the middle of the room tapping her dainty shod foot with a riding target.

Lady Judith Trevors was at home and her face showed that she was in a passion.

It was the day after the duel of adventures just recorded, and she and the man who had come to her aid were the sole occupants of the apartment.

Lady Judith had come on a ride and carried in one of her gloved hands a small riding whip.

As she spoke she drew the whip back as if about to lay it across the servant's face, but refrained, perhaps out mercy for she might have harbored in her heart.

"Say! It shall be said," she said, at last, while the man shivered at the wall, fearful of another outburst of words. "Tell me the story again."

She was out last night and down at the river. Suddenly I saw a light on the opposite bank, and then the forms of two men and a skiff shot out from the shore. I saw something human from the waters just beneath me, and, guessing that some one had been deceived me, your grace, and I saw one of the men struggle with the other, with the burden over his shoulder and both vanished toward the Hall.

"When was this?"

"Soon after midnight."

"Was the skiff from the grasp of the waters alive?"

"I wonder who saved the wretch!" she exclaimed, striking her riding habit with the whip. "Did he, or she, tell you? Was the detective one of the couple? I wish I knew for certain."

She paced the room like a maddened tigress, her bosom rising and falling with half suppressed passion and her hands that like vises.

Now her face was white and almost expressionless, and now again it reddened to her forehead and seemed to burn like fire.

"Did I fail? Did I make a balk of the business last night?" she cried. "I had the fool at my mercy and yet I half spared him. I thought the waters and the rocks would finish my work, but it seems they did not. The next time—"

"The horse, your grace," said a voice at the door, and Lady Judith started forward but stopped after one step.

"Take him back to the stables! I have changed my mind," she said, throwing the whip in one corner. "I won't ride just now."

The door shut and again the mistress of Trevors Grange was alone.

In another instant she had bounded from the high-ceiled chamber and was mounting the broad staircase two steps at a time.

Her heart must have beat like the wings of a caged eagle against the bars of his cage. Her breath came fast and hot, and she panted as she hurried to a room, the door of which she locked behind her.

She went to a small desk which she locked behind her.

She went to a small desk which she unlocked and took therefrom a small silver-mounted revolver which she concealed in the pocket of her dress.

Then she went through a lot of private papers, half of which she tore up and threw into a grate where a fire was burning, for the early morning was quite cool.

This occupied her half an hour and then she locked again at the revolver to see that it was properly charged.

"What a fool I was last night!" she said, aloud. "I had the wretch at my mercy and I thought the waters would finish him. Would he have been? Not, indeed! He can't balk me. He cannot hope to defeat all my purposes."

Once more she was below and touched a silver call bell on the oval table.

A servant appeared.

"Tell Butler I'll ride now," she said.

In a little while the handsome mettled sorrel was at the door and Lady Judith tripped down the steps and mounted.

She gathered up the reins and touched the horse with the whip to canter toward the river.

"What's stirred her blood, I wonder," said the man Jones watched till horse and rider disappeared among the trees. "She was out last night and alone. She goes out o nights a good deal here o' late, and always toward the bridge. It was thought once that she was setting her cap for the old Lord Mascot, but some one interfered with a dagger and balked her hopes if she had any in that direction. Now, there's no Sir Basil and my lady is still a coal of fire and never at rest home or abroad."

Several hours elapsed before the sorrel was seen coming back up the shaded walk to the mansion.

Lady Judith sat upright in the saddle and no one could have told by her calm face what was going on in her heart. She looked as sphinx-like as ever, and when she threw the reins over a post at the steps she tripped into the old house and then into the handsome room.

A maid came in at sound of the call bell.

"Carl," said Judith, throwing the riding whip away from herself into a chair.

In a minute Carl, the man who had told the story of his adventure at the river, entered the chamber.

"Shut the door tight," said Lady Judith, eyeing the man closely, and it was done.

"How long have you been here, Carl?" she asked, angrily.

"Six and twenty years come this fall, your grace."

"And you like your place?"

"Why shouldn't I?"

"True. You will serve me in everything, Carl?"

"To the death, your grace!" cried the man.

"In everything, mind you, nothing excepted?"

"I am your slave as I was the faithful servitor of your father, Sir Muriel."

"I am going to trust you, Carl. As I never before trusted living man you are to be trusted by the child of that name Sir Muriel. Say the answer."

Another obsequious bow followed Judith's words and the man awaited his mission.

"There's a man in my road!" suddenly continued Lady Judith. "He is the bane of my life. He seeks my everlasting undoing. Carl, faithful friend of my father, I come to you for help. You will not fail me? You are strong, cunning and true. You know something, more than I, about across the stream. You must cross the river and find that man for me."

"To the death, my lady!" cried the man.

"You must find him and keep just him out of my way. He has but lately come down from London. How I know he is there, Heaven and Hugo Rivard only tell, but I do. He is one of those busybodies called detectives. He is both crafty, dangerous, and will do anything for the young chit he would entangle me in the meshes of justice. You must cross the river tonight. You must find Donald Black and kill, kill, kill! You hear me, Carl!"

The man, a scoundrel at heart, rose to the importance of the occasion. He held out his hands, Judith darted across the room and seized them.

Neither spoke; their eyes sealed the terrible compact.

Another installment of this fascinating story will appear next week. Ledger readers are respectfully asked to note advertisement announcements on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Only one man in 203 is over six feet in height.

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Free Trial Package of This New Discovery Mailed to Every Man Sending Name and Address—Quickly Restores Strength and Vigor.

Free trial packages of a most remarkable remedy are being sent to all who will write the State Medical Institute. They stated the doctors had battled for many years against the mental and physical suffering caused by folly, vice, or the excesses of youth, and that at last a home treatment was found which will restore it all who write it is a home treatment and all who suffer with any form of sexual weakness resulting from youthful folly, premature loss of strength and memory, weak back, varicocele, or emaciation of parts can now cure them-selves at home.

The remedy has a peculiarly grateful effect of warmth and seems to act direct to the decayed location giving strength and development just where it is needed. It cures all the ills and troubles that come from years of misuse of the natural functions of the body, and is a success in all cases. A request to the State Medical Institute, No. 31 Electric Block, Fort Wayne, Indiana, stating that you desire a free trial package, will be complied with promptly. The Institute is not a free dispensary, but those of them who are unable to leave home to be treated, and who write it, will be given a home treatment. How easy it is to cure of sexual weakness when the proper remedies are employed. The Institute issues no restrictions. Any man who writes will be sent a free sample, securely sealed in plain package so that its recipient need have no fear of embarrassment or publicity. Readers are requested to write without delay.

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This wonderful table or desk world stands 15 inches high. It is 8½ inches in diameter and is handsomely finished in ebony. It has wooden base and upright. It is fastened on a pivot so it can be revolved and kept at any angle desired. The oceans are shown in pale blue, the countries in red, green and yellow. Mountain ranges are shown. Every family should have one. It is instructive and interesting. OUR FREE OFFER: In order that every member of our family may have a WORLD FREE, we will send it, all charges prepaid, to every one who sends us 18 cents in stamps or silver for a three months' subscription to Boyce's Monthly. We believe we can introduce our great monthly in thousands of homes in this way. When you see the choice reading and splendid premiums we know you will want the paper regularly. Boyce's Monthly has from 16 to 24 pages every issue. Remember that we give the world free, the 18 cents merely pays for a three months' subscription. Address,

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His Self Denial.

"So your husband didn't give up anything during Lent, Mrs. Dresser?"

"No, the mean thing. He says he is going to wait and deny himself the pleasure of seeing me have a new Easter hat."

A Friendly Call.

"Mrs. Gaddaby is sadly neglecting her work at the Give All a Chance Mission."

"But it's only temporary, I think. I understand she has been visiting her husband for a few days."

The Ostrich—Why not? Those European women put our feathers on their heads—Why shouldn't we cover our baldness with their hats?

Harder Still.

Mr. Jones—A minister out west tried to run a newspaper the way the Lord would run it.

Mrs. Jones—If he had succeeded it would have been a wonderful thing.

Mr. Jones—Yes; but not half so wonderful as if he had run a church the way the Lord would run it.

Not Her Business.

Tess—I see you have a new young man visiting you now. He's a professional man, isn't he?

Jess—My, no! He's too young to be more than an amateur.

Tess—Don't be facetious. What's his profession?

Jess—Really, I don't know. I believe I'm the object of his calling.

As He Remembered It.

Sunday School Teacher (of waifs' mission)—And when the owner of the vineyard went out about the eleventh hour and found a lot of men standing idle in the market place what did he say to them?

Muggsy de Newsboy—He says: "Wot ye soldierin' fur? Git busy!"

Tommy Carries His Point.

"Tommy Tucker!"

"Yess, ma'am."

"In this sentence, 'Esau, go to your seat,' parse 'Esau.'"

"Esau's a proper noun, masculine gender, third person singular——"

"Esau. Esau, Esau—ouch!"

Noise.

It was not long until the successful Scot was approached by a magazine of literature, in behalf of its seven million and odd intelligent readers.

"Tell us," implored the magazine, "how to make a noise in the world."

"Hoot, mon," replied the great personage, with a deprecatory gesture.

A Reassuring Name at Least.

Mrs. Handout—Here is a piece of loaf cake. I hope you will like it.

Grogsy Grugan—I hope I will, leddy, of its ingredients are as delicious ter de taste as its name is ter de ear.

Discovered by a Woman.

I have discovered a positive cure for all female diseases and the piles. It never fails to cure any of the various diseases peculiar to women, such as tumors, displacements, ulceration, granulation, etc., or the piles from any cause, of either sex. I will gladly mail a box of this wonderful medicine free to every sufferer. MRS. C. B. MILLER, Box 20, Dickerson, Ind.

Sometimes Happens So.

Biggs (opening his envelope on pay day)—I see I have got my entire week's salary in one bill.

Higgs (opening another larger envelope)—That nothing. I have here one bill for my entire week's salary.

Rewarded.

"Ha! ha!" cried the redoubtable Mr. Hampshat, who was struggling with the role of heavy villain, "at last I am the victor."

"Yes," shouted a disgusted gallery-god, heaving a few sick eggs stageward, "and to the victor belongs the spoils."

Teacher—A man bought three pounds of meat for thirty-six cents, a can of tomatoes for eight cents, and some potatoes for five cents. Now, what does that make?

Bright Scholar—Soup.

His Great Grief.

"Old man, you'll burst if you keep on like that," said the ward heeler who had led him up to the bar and proceeded to fill him with beer. "Don't you know you've only got storage room for what one man can drink?"

That's wot alius breaks my heart," replied Pulfold Knutt. "I've got the thirst fur six."

"Knock 'Em Down With a Club"

Mallards, Pintails, Bluebills and Teal are plentiful on the Kankakee marsh, on the Monon Route. Get tickets to Shelby at City Ticket Office, 232 Clark St.

Ring Up!

"Look here," said the well-dressed man, who had been accosted on Clark street, "this is the fourth time I have bought your wife's wedding ring. How many wives have you?"

"Five or six, boss," chuckled the beggar. "You see, I'm from Salt Lake City."

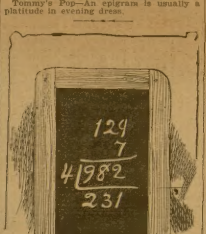
The Difference.

Tommy—Pop, what is a platitude?

Tommy's Pop—A platitude, my son, is a commonplace remark.

Tommy—Then what is an epigram?

Tommy's Pop—An epigram is usually a platitude in evening dress.



A BAD EXAMPLE.

The Modern Way.

The Pullet—What are you sitting on the water trough crowing that way for, you nothing?

The Shanghai—There's a strange Cochin looking through the fence, and I'm making a naval demonstration.

Elevation Desirable.

Lady (with high hat)—I beg your pardon, but I forgot my opera glasses. Would you kindly lend me yours just a moment?

Tyrant Man (in the seat behind)—Very sorry, madam, I need it to sit on.

Preparatory.

Bookkeeper—Your wife is at the door, sir, and would like to speak to you a moment.

Mr. Sellerest—Tell her what my balance at the bank is, will you?

Perpetual Wakefulness.

Doctor—And the twins? Are they well?

Papa—Quite well, thank you.

Doctor—How do they sleep?

Papa—In day and night shifts.

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A tray full.

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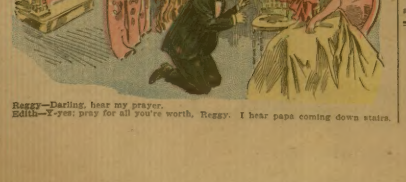
THE TIME FOR PRAYER.



Reggy—Darling, hear my prayer.
Edith—I'm yes; pray for all you're worth. Reggy. I hear papa coming down stairs.

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Selling the Reidmore Thermal Bath Cabinet. Only Cabinet Patented, and Guaranteed The Best. One agent made $292 last month, others making $90. We want an agent in every town. Exclusive territory given. Very liberal terms. Write quick as you can for our free catalogue.
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STORYETTES.

The Judge's Double Entry.

Judge James Fitzgerald of the New York supreme court is an excellent example of what perseverance and singleness of purpose will accomplish. The judge, who is about 40 years old, supported not only himself but helped his family while serving as a cash boy in a store and might be attended Cooper Union. Later he read law at night and managed to be admitted to the bar at the same age that most young men begin practice. The judge has had more than fair sailing, though, since he became a lawyer. He is a powerful man physically, ruddy, and an active as a lynx. To his native Irish wit is added a power of speech that nearly approaches eloquence. He soon took a prominent part in politics and was for years a member of the legislature.

Several years ago he was appointed an additional assistant district attorney at the comfortable salary of $7,500 the year. Before taking office he married and went on a prolonged wedding trip. When he returned a month's pay was due him and he went to the office for it. During his honeymoon he had traveled over a good part of this country and as his funds were low he went direct from the train to the office.

"Here is your money, counselor," said the pay clerk, deferentially, after his kind.

"All right," replied Mr. Fitzgerald, pocketing the roll of bills.

"Sign the pay roll, please," continued the clerk.

"Of course," responded the bridegroom, and, absent-mindedly, he wrote as follows:

"James Fitzgerald and wife."

And the entry is on the city books to this day.

Another New York Mystery.

"When I was down ter New York last week," remarked Uncle Absalom Cobb, "I got acquainted with a feller in the waitin' room at the ferry that told me he liked farmers better'n any other class of people. He said they were honester, knew more, had better things to eat, had more money an' enjoyed life better than the men in any other perfession. He said he always wished he'd been a farmer.

"He did," ejaculated Farmer Rakestraw. "Sho! What perfession did he foller?"

"That's where the puzzle comes in. I couldn't tell. He wasn't one of them here bunko fellers, fer he didn't try ter work me; and he wasn't no candidate for office, fer he didn't even offer me a drink. I dunno but he may have been a poet, or the editor of one of them agricultural papers."

Pure Contrariness.

"I am looking for the last chapter of this novel to see how it ends, before I begin to read it."

"And if it doesn't end happily you won't read it?"

"On the contrary, I won't read it if it does end happily."

"Why is that?"

"I take a grim sort of satisfaction in imagining there are other persons, even in fiction, who are up against it as badly as I am."

Then the man with the boil on the back of his neck grinned ferociously and began to read the book, which he had discovered to be a tragedy.

History.

"We've got the world beaten to a standstill now," observed the magazine editor.

His entourage at once prostrated themselves, kissed the hem of his garment and implored him to be pleased to relieve their anxious curiosity as to what he meant.

"Certainly," said the editor, indulgently. "It's a series of war articles by a janitor of the war department, including the contents of 462 waste paper baskets not hitherto published, copiously illustrated by the best artists!"

There were doubtless other magazines having each the largest number of intelligent readers, but that there was none equally as enterprising, this the entourage did not permit themselves to doubt.

A Hint to Suitors.

"Good evenig, Mr. Manygirls," said the young man.

"Evening," responded Mr. Manygirls, gruffly. A pile of papers, evidently bills, lay scattered in front of him. Hence his gruffness. The young man smiled.

"Bills for your seven daughters' spring clothes and bonnets, I presume?" said he.

"Yes," replied the old man; "but is it any of your business?"

"It is. I have come to ask you if I may not take one of those daughters off your hands."

The old man rose with a smile.

"Take one?" he exclaimed. "Why, boy, you can move to Utah and take the whole seven!"

The young man had caught him at the right time.

How Does Your Girl Eat?

No prudent young man would think of marrying a girl until he has seen her eating several times, declares a masculine observer.

If she eats her dinner in a lazy, indifferent way, as if, taking no interest in the operation, he may be sure that she will not take an interest in his dinner.

A MATTER OF EXPERIENCE.

Miss Creedly—How religious beliefs have changed of late years. You scarcely ever meet a person now who believes in a literal and personal devil.

Mrs. Bufferd—Remember, my dear, you have never had a husband.

A man admired three sisters so much that he did not know which of them to select for a wife. He was enabled to decide by seeing them all eating cheese on one occasion.

One of them ate a little of the rind of the cheese, was disqualified her, showing as it did that she was coarse in her tastes.

A second girl cut the rind off, but took much of the cheese with it. This cut off her chance, for it indicated a wasteful disposition.

The third scraped off the rind carefully and won the day—for the man. It was a near shave, but she scraped into matrimony.

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BY

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It seems almost a pity that any of the war taxes should have to go, they are so simple, direct, and scientific.

Why is it that it takes Uncle Sam so much longer than anybody else to acquire the smokeless powder habit?

The Chicago river is not like the lake or the Medes and Persians. It can be altered or amended and frequently is.

As soon as General Miles hears of it he should deny the rumor that he is about to declare himself a presidential candidate.

President Kruger owns up to seventy-five years. If Joe Chamberlain and Salisbury don't hurry up with their hanging he will die in bed of old age.

Since its export from this country to Turkey averaged only $13 per year, it isn't likely that the sultan's embargo on American pork will cause much of a squeal.

One of the New York evening yellows has a department in which it tries to teach its readers how to eat. It should begin by instructing them to keep their feet out of the trough.

Senator Proctor's speech gave warning to his party of the peril which menaces in the attempt to nullify the constitution and repudiate the faith of the nation in respect to Porto Rico.

Americans should not lose sight of the fact that the question of the Alaskan boundary from Portland Channel to Mount St. Elias, 6,000 miles miles in a straight line, still remains to be settled.

The troubles in Ashanti appear to have grown out of the finding of the "golden stool" and the attempt of the governor to take possession of it. The golden stool, it should be explained, is the seat of war.

A recent visitor to the home of General Cassius M. Clay in Kentucky says that the old gentleman is in the best of health and spirits in spite of his advanced age. The trouble he went through on account of his last marriage seems not to have affected his health in the least.

The speech of Senator Fairbanks in the senate on the Porto Rico bill laid bare the general situation in a masterly way. His exposure of the attitude of the sugar trust, which is in politics all things to all men, but its own interests first, last, and all the time, left little to be said.

CUPID ON RUNNERS.

BY CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS.

Littlewood Phillips had been in love with Mildred Farrington for two years, ever since he first met her at the Hallowells' card party. He had no good reason to doubt that his love was returned, yet so fearful was he that he had misread her feelings, so much did he dread her refusal of his suit, that he had never hinted that she was more to him than any of the girls he met at the church socialbles and card parties in Newington. Innumerable chances for a declaration of love had offered themselves, for he was a regular caller at the Farrington mansion, but this youth was as devoid of spunk as a hare, and was no hearer the goal of his desires today than he had been when Cupid first aimed his dart at him.

So matters stood when a snowfall that brought sleighing in its wake visited Newington, and Littlewood became conscious of the fact that he had actually asked Miss Farrington to take a ride with him. Of course he must perforce bring matters to a crisis now. He was afraid that Judge Farrington would be asking his intentions and it would be humiliating to have such a question come before he could refer him to the girl for an answer. No, beyond a doubt, he must pluck up enough courage to ask her to be his wife or else cease calling upon her—an attempt of which he was serious enough to chill his heart.

The evening was soon at hand. A crescent moon shone in the east and the stars were cold and scintillating. He walked to the livery stable and asked for the cutter, and a few minutes later he was driving a handsome chestnut to the house where his thoughts spent most of the time. Miss Farrington kept him waiting a good half hour, but he reflected that it was the privilege of her glorious sex and it only made him love her the more. If she had come out and placed her dainty foot upon his arm he would have been overcome with rapture. In fact, in his present state, which had already been his state for twenty-four months, Littlewood was not many removes from a calf.

It was cold waiting, so he got out and hitched his horses and stood in front of her house, her faithful sentinel until death—if need be, for that is what he was resolved to think that his services would be required but it pleased his self-love to imagine himself clasping her in the clinch of which tongue stood in such awe that it could scare loose itself in the presence.

At last she appears. The restive horse stands his head and is off like a shot before Littlewood handed her into the sleigh, stepped in himself, threw in the robes and chirruped to the horse. That intelligent animal did not move. A flush of mortification o'erspread the face of the would-be amorous swain. A balky horse, and at the start. What chance would he have to deliver his precious message that was to make him and Mildred, in the sleigh and the horse, but again the horse continued to stand still.

"You might unhitch him, Mr. Phillips. That would be better," said Mildred, in her sweet voice.

"Oh, yes—to be sure. I must have tied him. I mean I—er—I di—I think I did hitch—er—"

"There seems to have been a hitch somewhere," she answered.

He stepped out of the sleigh and looked over his shoulder at her in a startled way. Could she mean anything by that? Was she encouragement? Oh, no, it was too soon. (Too soon, and he had been in love two years!) He unhitched the horse and once more replaced himself beside his loved one.

The frosty stars seemed to have set a seal upon her lips, for as they sped over the rustling snow not a word fell from either of them she was silent.

"I must have offended her. I've probably made a break of some kind," said Littlewood to himself. "How unfortunate. But I must tell her frankly. I'll be sure to. Her silence. This attention is too marked to pass as a mere courtesy on the winter season. She knows I never took anybody but my mother sleigh riding before."

Then began a process of nerving himself to the avowal. He ground his teeth together until the bones ached. His breathing was feverish.

"Mum—Mildred—I mean Mildred." And then he stopped. He had never called her Mildred before. He had never called her Mildewed, either, but that was accidental, and he hoped that she had not noticed the slip.

"I have something of the greatest importance to say to you."

Did he imagine it, or did she nestle closer to him? He must have been imagining it, and to show that he was quite sure, he edged away from her until there was the somewhat narrow confines of the sleigh would allow.

"What do you say, Mr. Phillips?"

"Mister" Phillips. Ah, then she was offended. To be sure, she had always called him that, but after the last remark it must have an added significance.

"I—er—was saying—fine sleighing?"

"Why, of course, or else I wouldn't have come."

Did she mean that as a slap at him? Was it only for the ride and not for his company that she had come? Oh, he would never make an avowal of love after that. He knew his place. The beautiful girl was not for a faint-hearted cailiff like himself.

"Whu—mum—Mildred, I was not," he—thought that was why you came."

Mildred turned her gazelle-like eyes upon him. "I'm afraid I don't understand you."

That settled it. If she didn't understand him when he talked of nothing in particular, he must be very blind in his utterance, and he could never trust his tongue to carry such a heavy freight as a declaration of love. No, there was nothing to do but postpone it. After all, her house was the best place for it.

The horse sped on, past mantled meadows and through pine woods full of silent moonlight and Mildred drank in the beauty of the scenes and wished that it were decorous for women to propose.

The night was ravishing, the sleigh bells jingled harmoniously, the horse swept on with steady, rhythmic stride, and under the influence of the sweet surroundings Mildred at last said, pointedly: "Is it so that more people get engaged in winter than in summer?" She blushed as she spoke. It was unmaidenly, but he was such a dear gump. Now he would declare himself. But she did not know the capabilities for self-expression of her two-year admirer.

He said to himself: "What a slip, what a delightful slip. If I were unprincipled I would take advantage of it and propose, but I would bitterly reproach myself forever. Whatever her answer was, he said in as matter-of-fact a tone as he could master when his heart was beating his ribs like a frightened cageling. "I really can't answer off-hand, but I'll look it up for you."

"Do. Write a letter to the New York Sun."

Her tones were as musical as ever, but Littlewood thought he detected a sarcastic ring in them and he thanked his stars that he had not yielded to his natural desire to propose, at such an inauspicious time.

"What was that important thing you wanted to say?" asked Miss Farrington after several minutes of silence, save for the hoofs and the runners and the bells.

"Oh, it wasn't of any importance. I mean It was of no importance—I was thinking of something else."

"I think you have gone far enough," said she, innocently, looking over her shoulder in the direction of home. Maybe the return would loosen his obdurate tongue.

"Mum—and a heart beating as and lay, a leaden thing, in his breast. Had he, then, gone too far? What had he said? Oh, why had he come with this lovely being in the mere sight of whom was enough to make everyone else extinct to him and shout and declare in thunderous tones that he loved her.

"I think that we'd better go back," he said, and turned so quickly that he nearly upset the sleigh. "Your mother will be anxious."

"Yes, when one is accountable to one's mother, one has to remember time. I suppose it is different when one is accountable to a—"

"Father?" said Littlewood, assininely.

"No, that wasn't the word I wanted."

"A-a-sunt?"

Could Mildred love him if he gave many more such proofs of being an abject idiot?

"No, that is what I want."

"Littlewood's brain swam. He had been temporarily paralyzed. This time the reins lay innocently played into his hands, and now the Rubicon must be crossed, even if its angry waves engulfed him.

"Pardon me, Miss—er—Mildred." (He did not say Mildewed this time.) "If I twist your words into another meaning, but if you mean—you want a husband—do you think that I would do?"

Mildred looked on his shoulder, a little hand was in his, and when he passed the Farrington mansion neither he nor she knew it.

SUPPLANT COFFEE.

Relief of a Raymond Lady.

Mrs. J. T. Bartlett, Raymond, N. H., says: "I suppose that coffee was the cause of my persistent dyspepsia and terrible fastheart. I always had a fullness in the heart. It was hard to give up coffee, but when I used some Postum Food Coffee, and learned how to make it properly, I quickly obtained relief from the old troubles. The unpleasant sensation of fullness at the heart has entirely gone.

"When I first tried Postum, I failed to notice the injunction to boil it fifteen minutes, and when it was only boiled a few minutes, as I would coffee. I was disappointed in the flavor, and did not try it again until told by a friend that this was one of the difficulties essential. I have since observed the rule and am entirely satisfied with the drink. It is simply perfect. I believe it to be the coming drink of the future, and that it is destined to supplant coffee everywhere.

"One of our business men here has been improved in health by the use of it. No one could wish to return to coffee drinking after once having tasted the delightful and healthful Postum Food Coffee."

Read the little book from the makers of the Postum Cereal Co., Ltd., Battle Creek, Mich.

In Danger.

"The Bear That Prayed Like a Man was felicitine himself upon his finesse.

"Be careful," interposed the Other Bear, "or you'll be mistaken for a deer and shot."

For those forests were much frequented by amateur hunters from the large cities, and it was extremely dangerous even remotely to resemble a man.

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Wonderful Sewing Machine on 4 days' address on free three month's trial, making each machine sewing and special new prices, so much lower than any other house ever thought of making, that our offer will surprise you. For free new Sewing Machine catalogue and special offer, cut this notice out and mail to SEARS, ROEBUCK & Co., Chicago, Ill.

Pleasant Prospect.

"Marie, after we are married what course shall you pursue to retain my love?"

"Oh, Harry, I shall spend an awful lot of money on clothes and look just as pretty as I can."

Pictures Free.

Mr. A. H. Hanson is giving away books telling of the beautiful scenery on the I. C. R. R. Every reader is entitled to one free. Address A. H. Hanson, G. P. A., Illinois Central R. R., Chicago.

Some Kinds Can't.

"War can always be avoided," asserted the lecturer.

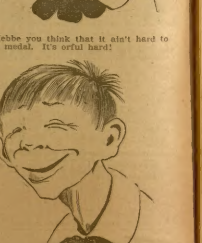
The man in the back row laughed scornfully.

"Evidently," he said, the speaker is not married."

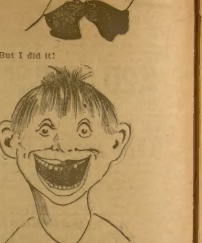
The Medal for "Goodness."

1. Paw said he'd take me to the circus if I got the medal for being good in school.

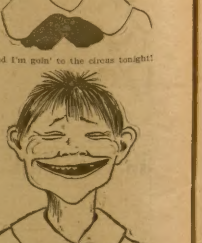
2. Mebbe you think that it ain't hard to win a medal. It's awful hard!



3. —But I did it!



4. And I'm goin' to the circus tonight!



5. But I had to give Jimmy Brady an awful soak before he gave up that medal!

A CLEVER MAKE-UP.

Henry Apps of Hoxton completed the fixing of the wires on the lawn of Hasleigh court He looked up at the dim light in the dressing room and chuckled softly as he bent the last yard of wire.

"A trip in time," says Mr. Apps, "saves nine."

He threw the rope ladder gently in the air, and at the first effort it caught the projecting nail.

"Once on board the lugger," quoted Mr. Apps, facetiously, as he mounted the rope ladder, "and the gurl is mine."

He opened the window very gently and soon stood inside the dressing room. Near the table in corner of the room was an iron safe.

"Well, I'm jiggered," exclaimed Mr. Apps. He loosened the flaps of his fur cap and mopped his brow with the back of his hand. "Well, I'm jiggered! If they haven't been and left the key in for me. I might have saved myself a lot of trouble if I'd a knowed."

Mr. Apps swung open the heavy door of the safe and listened to the music down stairs. Young Lady Staplehurst was giving (as Mr. Apps very well knew) a dance, a fancy dress dance, on her return from the Continent, after her term of widowhood.

"I'll just see first of all," he said, "that the coast is absolutely clear, and then—then for a bagful."

Henry Apps stepped out into the broad passage. He slouched, with his jimmy sticking out of his capacious side pocket, a few steps toward the stairs. Suddenly a girlish figure turned the corner.

"Bless my 'art!" cried Mr. Apps.

"Why, how do you do?" said the young lady, stepping forward. She gave a soft laugh that was very pleasant. "This is really delightful. Do you know, I recognized you in spite of the costume."

She held the hand of Mr. Apps for a moment, causing that gentleman to gasp for breath, and called one of the maids.

"Just bring me a pencil and a card," she said, "I must arrange for a carriage to take Captain Norman back to his hotel in the morning. I wasn't sure that he would come."

"I can walk," remarked Mr. Apps, with restored self-possession.

"I won't hear of it. When shall we say, now?"

"Say in an hour's time," said Mr. Apps. "I can go upstairs again alone, change my togs and do all I want to."

"And can't you stay longer?"

She gave the card to the maid and ordered it to be dispatched at once:

"I've got a busy night before me," urged Mr. Apps, excusingly. He thought of his dog waiting on the lawn and feared it might give an inopportune bark. Besides, the safe was still open and the diamonds were waiting for him. He had noticed with satisfaction that Lady Staplehurst was wearing none.

"You were always an active man, captain."

"Always a-doing something," agreed Mr Apps. "If it isn't one thing it's another." He shook his head reflectively. "I often wonder I don't write a book about it all."

"I don't believe you will know anybody here, Captain Norman," she said, as they walked downstairs, "but I couldn't help sending you a card, seeing how friendly we were on the Peshawur. Do you remember those evenings on deck in the Red Sea?"

She was really a very fine young woman and in her costume she looked extremely well.

"Do I not?" said Mr. Apps, with much fervor. "Shall I ever forget 'em?"

"And then the journey from Brindisi, you know, and that funny little German—you remember him?"

"He was a knock-out, that German was."

"And the girl who played the banjo, and—"

"It was great," agreed Mr. Apps, "great."

The large room was very full. A small covey of brightly dressed young people flew toward the young hostess to complain of her temporary absence from the room, and a broad-shouldered Gondolier shook hands with her and took up her card with something of an air of proprietorship.

"I thought I had left the ke[illegible] use me." The young hostess [illegible] her card from the Gondolier. "I am engaged to Captain Norman. You don't know him? Allow me."

"Pleased to meet you," said Henry Apps. "Ow's the world using you?"

"That's an original costume of yours, Captain Norman," remarked the Gondolier. "I don't know that I've ever seen anything so darlingly neat before"

"Well, wot of it?" demanded Mr. Apps, with sudden aggressiveness; "wot's the odds to you wot I like to wear? You needn't think you're——"

"Captain Norman," interposed the young hostess, laughingly, "you mustn't overdo the part. Look here, I've put your name down for this waltz, but if you like, we'll sit it out—that is, if you promise to keep up that diverting East End talk. I like it. Do you think you can manage to do so?"

"Rather!" said Mr. Apps.

"And it is a capital make-up, Captain Norman," she went on. "Do you know that at first, just for one moment, I thought you were a real burglar."

"Fancy that now," said Mr. Apps. He was relieved at seeing an obvious way out of his difficulty. "There's nothing like doing the thing in a proper, striteforward w'y."

"And," said Lady Staplehurst, with her fan on his arm as they walked across the room, "you have got the East End accent [illegible]."

"'Tain't so dusty, is it?"

She beckoned to the Gondolier

"Captain Norman and I ar[illegible] friends," she said in an explanato[illegible]. "He has not long been home from abroad, and he knows scarcely anyone."

"Not a blessed soul," echoed Mr. Apps.

"You must let me show you around a bit, Captain Norman," said the Gondolier, with determined geniality "Can you come round to my club one night this week?"

"Whaffor?" demanded Mr. Apps, suspiciously.

"Why, to dine! Say Thursday."

"'Eavens knows where I shall be Furs[illegible]," said Mr. Apps. "I don't[illegible]"

"You must consider me at your disposal if you require any instructions. I know a good lot of people and any friend of Lady Staplehurst's——"

"Oh, come off the roof,' said Mr. Apps, with much discontent; "wot's the use of torking"

"Isn't it capital?" asked Lady S[illegible]hurst of the Gondolier, delightedly. "[illegible] much more interesting it would be if every one would only talk to me in their charac[illegible]"

Lady Staplehurst rose with something of [illegible] in her manner and spoke to Henry VIII.

"What regiment do you belong to, Captain Norma[illegible]" asked the Gondolier

"Find out," said Mr. Apps

"Am I too curious? I know very little of the army, I'm afraid." The Gondolier w[illegible] resolved to be agreeable to Lady St[illegible]hurst's friend. "I always dodge the army nights in the House. I suppose you know several of the service members?"

"I know as many as I want to know," said Mr. Apps, evasively. "A man in my position of life 'as to be careful who he mixes up with"

The hostess returned from Henry VIII.

"I can make nothing of this man," whispered the Gondolier to her as he rose. "I think he's silly."

"If you knew his qualities you wouldn't speak of him like that." She resumed her seat by the shade of Henry Apps.

"Well, blow me," said Lady Staplehurst, screwing her pretty mouth in her effort to imitate the Cockney's accent; "blow me if this ain't a fair take—I mean like dah," she laughed. "It's of no use, Captain Norman, I can't talk as you ca[illegible]"

"It's a gift," said Mr. Apps; "that's what it is"

"You don't want to be introduced to anybody here, I suppose?"

"Not me."

"You have heard of —"

She pointed in the direction of the Gondolier.

"All I want to."

"He's really making a big name in the House, you know. I watch his career with great interest."

"Thinks a jolly lot of himself."

"Oh, I think a lot of him, too," remarked Lady Staplehurst, pleasantly. "And is that a jimmy sticking out of your jacket pocket? This is, indeed, realism. You don't know how it works, I suppose?"

"Well, I've got a kind of hidea," said Mr. Apps "Look 'ere. You put this end in and -"

Mr. Apps found himself getting quite excited in the explanation that he gave. It was a new sensation to meet one who showed an intelligent interest in his profession, and he could not help feeling flattered. Looking up, he saw the Gondolier gazing at him.

"He don't look 'appy, that chap," said Mr. Apps

"Will you excuse me for one moment?"

"Wot are you going up to?" he said, apprehensively.

"I want to speak to him."

"Oh! (with relief) I don't mind that."

While Lady Staplehurst was making the Gondolier resume his ordinary expression, Mr. Apps thought and thought. The couple promenading after the waltz looked curiously at him.

"You are in the worst fix you were ever in, 'Enery," said Mr. Apps; "you are a 'aving 'em on toast, you are; but you'll be glad to get upstairs agen. You want them diamonds, that's wot you want. Time means money to you, 'Enery."

Lady Staplehurst hurried toward the doorway. A murmur of amusement went through the room as the guests saw a new arrival in the costume of a police constable, accompanied by a man in plain clothes. Mr. Apps, thinking over his exploits, gazing abstractedly at his boots, regretting their want of polish, did not see them until the plain clothes man tapped him on the shoulder

"What, Apps again!" exclaimed the man

"Yes," said the burglar, discontentedly. "[illegible]t is Mr. Apps agin, Mr. Walk[illegible] And very glad you are to see him, I no dabt."

"[illegible] pleasure to meet a gentle[illegible] [illegible]ld Mr. Walker, cheerfull[illegible] [illegible]

Much commotion in the ball room [illegible] diverting little scene. General agreement that Lady Staplehurst was a perfect genius at entertaining

"But, loveliest," said the Gondolier, confidently to Lady Staplehurst, "isn't this carrying a joke rather too far? That's a real detective"

"I know," said the loveliest girl, trembling now a little. "That's a real burglar.

[illegible] Don't make a fuss. I don't want the dance spoilt. Take me down to supper, like a good fellow"

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"Outdoor sports? Oh, say—you don't mean it's time to beat carpets again, do you?"

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"[illegible] I compromise with my wife, and we're going to stay at home and study French"

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BOYS AND GIRLS CORNER

AN OCEAN MYSTERY.

The Adventures of Three Boys Who Were Cast Away on a Desolate Island in the Polar Sea.

by ALFRED B. TOZER.

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CHAPTER X.

GUARDED BY THE DEAD.

Recovering after a time from the sudden spasm of terror into which he had been thrown by the horrible sight, Charley lifted the lantern and again advanced into the rocky alcove.

He had been frightened by no trick of the fancy, born of the silent, desolate place and the weird environment. For the second time he saw the awful sight which had so completely unnerved him.

At the end of the alcove, seated upon immense, iron-bound sea-chests and supported in part by the wall at the back, were the corpses of three men. In the case of each the eyelids were lifted, and dead eyes stared stonily into the face of the boy. The bodies were dressed in the rough sailor clothes.

Scattered about the place were numerous empty tins, such as are used in preserving food, and a pile of ashes not far away showed that at one time the dead men had enjoyed the luxury of a fire there. Resolved to see what lay in the chests, Charley, not without some difficulty, removed one of the nearest and raised the cover of the iron-bound box. It was full to the very edge with gold pieces, some English, some Spanish, some French, and some American. An examination of the other chests revealed a similar condition of affairs. Every chest was filled with gold. And here, thought Charley, was untold wealth in their possession, the men had died, helpless and alone. That which would have brought them ease and honor in any civilized land, which would have extinguished them with time-servers and flatterers, in this lonely place could not bring them one little comfort of civilized life, or could in no way relieve the monotony of their desolate lives!

In a moment the strange actions of the captain of the Marion became intelligible to the boy. Mr. Stebbins must have known of this hoard of gold, must have been searching for the island when the iceberg put an end to all his hopes! Unable for some unknown reason to reach the hidden treasure in any other way, he had taken command of the whaler, saved the crew for the owner and fetch away the gold for his own profit. How deeply the members of the crew had been interested in the conspiracy, the boy could not determine; though it was evident that the shooting which had been observed from the first day of the voyage, that there had been no other bloodshedding of the purpose of the trip to the north. To reach this point of destination, the captain had to turn the prow of the Marion east at Cape Barrow, instead of to the west, as he had come to his death.

By what acts of murder, treachery and [illegible] the accumulation of this monstrous hoard of gold was due, by what means it had been conveyed to this spot; whether the [illegible] explanations of the mystery, Charley [illegible] to await the coming of a rescue [illegible] all these were problems the boy had no time then to consider. The excitement of the discovery once in a measure allayed, he thought again of the boy who was missing from the island.

It was certain that Robert had gone farther into the cavern, and that he had not made his way back, for the footprints led pointed toward the interior. Leaving the dead men where he had placed them, Charley took up his lantern again and pushed on. The floor of the cavern now began to dip downward rapidly, and before long the boy distinguished the steady pounding of the surf. In a moment more he came upon a large body of open water, not frozen like the face of the sea, but dashing and rippling against the walls of its basin-like home. It was plain that the opening in the rocks which admitted the water from the ocean was far below the ice which covered the sea's surface, else it would itself have been but a sheet of ice. How deeply the boy had penetrated into the bowels of the earth he had no means of knowing.

Pausing at the edge of this subterraneous lake, Charley fired several shots in rapid succession. It took a long time for the reverberations to die away, but when they were heard no more, the boy's heart bounded with joy at a sound which came to his ears. It was a faint and far-away call. [illegible] he could be no mistake about it. It was Robert's voice that he heard. But the voice came from beyond the lake of water. By what means had the boy crossed it? The mystery was solved in a moment, for a faint point of light became discernable in the distance. As it approached nearer, Charley saw that the illumination proceeded from an ordinary tin vessel swinging from a fork-like crutch at the extremity of a long pole. It was, in fact, just such an arrangement as the boy had often seen in torch-light processions in far-off America. The pole was fastened upright at the prow of a canoe made of skins, and in the center of the craft stood Robert, paddling with all his might. The reaction from the fervent anxiety to the certainty of the safety of his friend was so great that Charley burst into a hearty laugh as Robert sprang ashore and drew the canoe upon the shelving rock which formed the margin of the lake.

"You have given us a pretty scare," he said, as Robert advanced to where he was standing.

"Scare?" repeated Robert. "What's the [illegible]

"Don't you know that it is near midnight?" asked Charley. "What do you think Will is doing there all alone? I have been out after you since six o'clock."

"It was six o'clock," asked Robert, innocently. "I forgot all about the flight of time. Watch and I have been [illegible]

"Where did you get that torch?" asked [illegible] at the mouth of the [illegible] all ready for use."

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

a friend or a foe—whether the gold will be safe in her cabin!"

CHAPTER XII.
A GREAT SURPRISE.

Rushing into the cabin Will, whose broken limb had entirely healed, leaving him not a whit the worse for the accident, brought out a sea-glass which had been taken from the wreck of the Marion.

"Yes," he shouted, levelling the tube; "it's a screw-steamer, with great sails, and she is headed this way. See! There goes a signal gun. Hurrah! She knows we are here and is calling to us. Fire a gun, some one!"

Will capered around like a mad boy. He swung the glass in the air, and, leveling it again, told his companions of every movement on board the vessel. In the meantime, Robert had been firing one of the rifles, and Charley had been yelling with all his might.

"Yes, they're after us," shouted Will, presently, "for there's uncle on board, waving his handkerchief like mad. How did he ever find out what had become of us, I'd like to know? And there's cousin George and Captain Mills, the senior captain of uncle's fleet. And that ship is the Mary Elizabeth, uncle's crack ship. What can it all mean?"

All too slowly for the excited boys, the Mary Elizabeth steamed into the little bay and dropped anchor not far from the wreck of the Marion. The boys did not wait for a boat to be put out. They were out in the whale boat almost before the ship's anchor fell, and it did not take them long to ascend to the deck of the rescuing vessel. There they found the crew drawn up in line, with Captain Mills, Mr. Melville, and Will's cousin standing a little in advance of the line. And such a shout as went up when the three boys bounded over the rail and stood upon the immaculate deck. Mr. Melville lost no time in giving Will a genuine fatherly hug and extending a warm hand to Robert and Charley.

"Where are the rest?" asked Mr. Melville, after the boys had been properly pulled about by the captain and the sailors, and had been called Arctic bears and walrus and whales, and all sorts of pet names.

Will pointed in silence toward the bottom of the sea.

"They deserted us," he said, "leaving us alone on the Marion, when it was thought she'd go down every minute. Their boats were crushed by the breaking of the iceberg, and all were drowned. We got away to the island, with plenty of provisions, and have had a merry time. Now, uncle, it's your turn. How did you come to look here for us?"

"Well," was the reply, "the Marion had scarcely sailed when we began to hear things that we didn't like to hear regarding Captain Stebbins. At last, by paying a heavy price for the information, we learned from a sailor who had been left behind, after shipping on the Marion, that the captain had been a convert and now intended treachery. The sailor told us about this island, and what the captain expected to find here. The Marion did not return, and as soon as spring opened we decided to look you up. Here we are, and in a swift voyage."

"I guess Captain Stebbins was a tough one," said Captain Mills. "If he came here after treasure, he knew who put it here, and how it had been procured."

"Yes," shouted Will, "and we've got it—got it in the house up on the landing—got every dollar of it. Millions!"

The island was thoroughly explored by the sailors, the three corpses buried, and then it was not many days before the Mary Elizabeth was on her way home, with the boys on board and their gold stored in the cabin. Being rich, the youngsters desired to be magnanimous and pay Mr. Melville for his lost ship, and also for the expense incurred in bringing them off, but he only laughed at them, which, as he was richer far than all three together, he could well afford to do.

"I shall have every dollar of the money you found," he declared, "and I will invest it for you, and you can go wandering about the world as you see fit."

The boys disliked to leave their home on the island their pets, and the parting was a tearful one, but that part of their lives had come to a close, and there was no other way. The young bear and the walrus which had amused them during many a dark night were frisking together on the landing as the ship sailed away. The boys left the door of the house open so the animals might still inhabit it.

The Mary Elizabeth arrived at Boston in due time and with the arrival the story closed, closes on three rich and happy boys, and liberty now to wander over the world at will. For a long time Mr. Melville watched closely all reports of explorations in the north, but he never saw the island upon which the boys had lived mentioned in any way. He concluded, therefore, that after their departure the volcano had again assumed an active stage, and had, instead of enlarging the island, completely destroyed it. The boys, however, do not agree with him in this, and declare that some day they mean to go up there and learn the truth of the matter.

At such times Mr. Melville half promises to go with them and enjoy the delights of an Arctic winter.

"Only," he usually concludes, "I don't mean to get into any volcanoes, and I'd rather have two whole legs to go about with."

And Will admits that the leg was a drawback.

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The closing hymn had been sung, and the Rev. Dr. Fourthly was about to pronounce the benediction, when an official member of the church came forward, slipped something into his hand, and hurriedly whispered in his ear.

"A strange thing has happened," the doctor said, addressing his large congregation. "The trustees inform me that in looking over the collection taken up a week ago they have found a $5 gold piece, and they think it more than likely it was dropped in by mistake, the donor probably having intended to give five cents. If such is the case I hope the brother who contributed the coin will not have the slightest hesitation in coming forward at the close of the meeting and reclaiming it. As a slight penalty for his carelessness, however, we shall make it a condition that he give us a quarter of a dollar in exchange for it. He can't get this $5 back for a nickel."

In these days when one doubts that the world is growing better—that the general tendency of mankind is surely, even if slowly, in an upward direction—is there anybody who does not see this gradual uplift, this steady advance emerging from their sordid and sodden past and making of their destiny as the poet hath sung, stepping stones to higher things?

If such there be, let him go and hide his face from the gaze of his fellow creatures. Only one man—only one man, mark you, in all the vast audience—came forward to claim the $5 gold piece!

He Lost No Time.
The house was burning. People outside were yelling to them to hurry or it would be too late. The man grabbed up his loose belongings and saying, "Come on," started toward the stairway. When they reached it his wife stopped him, looked searchingly into his eyes as if to let him know that she would see through it if he failed to answer her truly, and said:

"John?"

"Yes, it's on straight," he replied, for he had been married five years and had studied woman.

A SPANISH GIRL'S LOVE.

BY EMMA MONROE OSBORNE.

Listen!

I stand here holding my very breath as that sweet, wild strain floats out to me.

It is the same maddening waltz picked on a guitar accompanied by the tinkling of a mandolin, that we waltzed to on those happy nights of the past.

The music of a guitar brings it all back to me with a sudden rush of bitterness.

Only a year ago tonight he and I waltzed together for the last time.

It was a glorious night with a full southern moon hanging high in the far away sky. The flowers sent up a hundred sweet odors from their dewey petals, seeming to invite us to a ramble among them. The low sighings of a guitar were wafted to us on the balmy breezes, and he told me again the same story I had listened to so often, yet it became sweeter at each telling, as we glided through that maze of love.

The hot blood surges through my veins and I seem to hear once more his low tender voice, and feel the hot breath fanning my face as he tells his love in low and appealing. No one can understand my feelings as we drifted on through that soothing, yet maddening waltz in the silvery, tempting light of the moon.

I loved him when I first saw him there among the roses. He was no different from our men; so young, bright and handsome. He was a rich young Englishman and I feared that he would not love me, poor little Spanish girl, but my deep love was drawing him on and on some day I hoped that he would love me.

A year ago tonight we were at a ball, and after the first delicious waltz he asked me, saying he would come back soon, and when he did return a woman was leaning upon his arm. She was of the delicate type of English girl with golden blue eyes, beautiful hair, and perfect complexion. I thought her lovely, but so cold, so emotionless whatever, even while leaning on him.

How glad I am that I can feel, even if it be only pain!

He introduced her to me as a friend who had been spending in her home a month, and wandered aimlessly around, leaving him to enjoy his friend's company.

Finally I stopped behind some large palms which formed a screen, and sat thinking of him. I was so happy and trusting in the security of his love. Suddenly I heard some one talking on the other side of the palms, and hearing my own name I listened. How can I believe what I hear.

Yes, my love, these Spanish girls are fine to flirt with. They can love with a passionity that would set some men on fire, and I admit that I have quite enjoyed it all, but you know, my darling, that I am going to lay you deep down in my heart, and I should have forgotten how to make love were it not someone to practice with, and she was the prettiest of the lot. You must not be jealous.

"No, Frederick, I am not jealous. It is not that, but she loves you and it is wicked of you to flirt with her. Every flash of her glorious eyes and every smile of those crimson lips are for you. Hers is a deep passion that she cannot disguise even if she will.

Oh, if she could only have known how easily I had overcome it. How easy he had made it for me!

The hot southern blood that rushes through my veins is even now burning me as intense hatred as with love an hour ago. As I stand there watching and listening she can know the pain that is tearing at my heart. Involuntarily I clutch the long dagger that is concealed in my dress. Oh, how quickly my love could turn to hate.

They move away and begin the dance—the dance that should have been mine. I still crouch behind the palms, my mad love in such a tumult I scarcely know what I am doing.

She is gone now; gone with his kiss upon her lips. I saw them as he told her to "Au revoir" on the other side of those same palms. He is looking and inquiring for me. I hear him say I must have gone home. I know where he will go to find me.

Slipping from my hiding place I turn coldly, yet silently on to our trysting place. Mr. Englishman, the one he gave me, the brunette seat. I pick it up and my purpose grows stronger. Hearing a footstep I look up and see him coming toward me with outstretched hands and smiling face.

"Ah, Zaselia, my queen, why did you——" "Hush! I——Now you say that to me after all I saw; all I heard tonight. I heard it from your own lips. Do you think I am going to let you live to love her while I am forsaken? Never!"

I do not know what I am going to do. By this time I am standing over him, my dagger raised above his heart.

"Zaselia, I know all; I saw all, but you will never suffer. In this way I prove my love for you. I will not suffer at the hands of others for it. Rather than that I shall kill myself. Farewell!"

Shocked beyond all power of speech, I turn to question the lad, but he is gone.

Strangely enough they were both buried over there side by side and I care for both graves. Strangely enough I loved them both, and I can see the marble gleaming through the trees, surrounding the dark green ivy relieved by its crimson border. Those are fitting emblems for both.

Burglar Sullivan's Plight.

"Help! Help! Murther!" came the voice, as if its possessor were at the bottom of a well, with a feather bed on top of him.

Policeman Snyder stopped short in his nocturnal wandering. He expected nothing more blood-curdling than an old man being beaten and robbed by a couple of thugs in a blind alley. Nevertheless, he drew his revolver and club. Thus fortified, he went on cautiously in the direction of the voice. In front of a tenement house he found the alley gate ajar.

"They're murtherin' me! Help! Help!" came the voice, huskier than before. Snyder peered into the alley. In the dim light he saw a pair of legs kicking for dear life. "Come out of there!" yelled the valiant Snyder.

"Faith an' that's what O'm a-tryin' to do," responded the voice.

Snyder's eyes were growing accustomed to the darkness, but instead of equipping a footpad and his victim they could still distinguish nothing but these kicking legs. As for the voice it seemed to come from the cellar.

There was something so uncanny about it that Snyder concluded a light would cheer him. So he struck a match.

It revealed the nature of the difficulty though it didn't explain it. The upper part of the legs and the voice was sticking fast in the cold air hole of the unused furnace.

"What's up, man?" exclaimed Snyder.

"Me legs, misther—get hold on 'em an' pull!" implored the subterranean voice.

Snyder pulled, but two weather-beaten shoes were the only evidences of his energy. The occupant of the hole didn't move an inch.

"Wait a minute an' I'll get help!" suggested Snyder.

"Niver fear 'bout moi waitin'," assured the voice. "But Oi say, misther, couldn't ye be aither 'commodatin' me wi' a chew?"

While Snyder was trying to wrestle with the problem of carrying ammunition to the imprisoned enemy he found the side door unlocked. Groping his way to the cellar, he was able to see the other half of the man in the hole.

"Hivin bless ye, even if ye are a copper!" exclaimed the prisoner, as he bit off half of Snyder's plug.

"Who are yer, an' what are yer doin' here?" asked the policeman.

"O'm Dinnis Sullivan, at yer service, sir —an' O'm a burglar," replied the prisoner, chewing vigorously.

Snyder, deciding that the temporary jail was about as safe as could be desired, departed in search of aid. He presently returned with several neighbors, armed with a hatchet, a poker and a coal shovel. "Dinnis," still suspended somewhat after the manner of a cherub on a Christmas tree, continued to chew and to kick.

'Twas the work of but a few minutes to batter down enough brick to free the man in the hole. But beneath all his dirt there was the irresistible good humor of his race, though he realized what he yet had to face.

To Lieutenant Fulmer of the Harrison street station, he narrated the story of his last few years. Since 1893 he had served various terms for larceny, but during the past year "Dinnis" had made more stealthily. Half a dozen of his prowess below he told in detail. He might mention being at the home of H. S. Palmer, 823 North Thirty-sixth street, last September. He got away with a gold watch and stole several pieces of the silverware.

"Don't you think that girl next door sings like a bird?"

"No; she sings the bird in a cuckoo clock."

"How's that?"

"She sings by the hour."

Newlywed (after the ceremony)—Do you really think I shall make a good mate, darling?

Mrs. Newlywed—Oh, you're all right. How do you like your captain?

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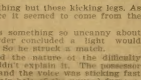

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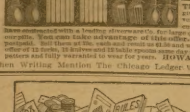

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BOYCE'S MONTHLY, Boyce Building, Chicago

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WHY HE CELEBRATED.

"Look out! Here comes the elephant with a terrible jag!"

"Yes; he's been full ever since he heard they were making billiard balls out of celluloid."

Expensive Eating.

The very height of luxurious living is a well-cooked ortolan, the little bird justly celebrated for the exquisite delicacy of its flesh. The birds are artificially fattened for the market. They are kept in a room the floor of which is plentifully strewn with millet seed and corn, and from which the daylight is gradually excluded. The ortolans have nothing to do but eat and under these conditions, says a writer of an interesting article on the ortolan in the current number of Pearson's Magazine, they pass the last five or six weeks of their existence. Gradually the feathers of the body drop out and the bird becomes a mere ball of fat with wings and a feathered head. Gently handling it, the operator picks up the bird and dips its beak into champagne, with the result that the bird dies suddenly and painlessly. If you order an ortolan at a first-class restaurant you have to pay $3 for it.

Street Highways.

In spite of the fact that America has been notorious for the lack of great highways ten states have exhibits at the Universal Exposition in Paris illustrating how perfect roads ought to be built. The government today has experiment stations in every state in the Union where lessons in road-making are taught. These object lessons, says a writer in the current number of Pearson's Magazine, have done more than anything else to start the great movement which is now furthering the construction of perfect roads the land over. Part of the government movement in the advocating of steel track wagon roads. Briefly, it is a system of laying wide steel rails upon ordinary highways. On such a road a single horse can draw a load of eleven tons that on an ordinary dirt road twenty horses can hardly move.

An April Fool Joke.

A faded purse upon the pavement lay
To tempt my greed, but I was not beguiled,
I passed it by, for this was All-Fools' Day.
I passed it by and noted, as I smiled,
That Jones, my stupid neighbor, followed me.

I lingered near and was again a child,
I saw him stoop and, from behind my tree,
I shouted "April Fool!" and felt the thrills
Which, years ago, had marked my boyish glee.

Ah, how the dimming eye with moisture fills
As memory brings back that April day!
The purse was full of twenty-dollar bills,
And Neighbor Jones went smiling on his way.

Modern Shields.

A bullet-proof shield has been invented, which, it now seems certain, will be adopted by the British infantry. Although less than one-eighth of an inch in thickness it is absolutely bullet-proof at less than 200 yards against Lee-Metford and Mauser rifles firing service ammunition. The shield, as described in the May number of Pearson's Magazine, is designed for the protection of the soldier when lying down to fire and also when advancing into action. When advancing in the face of a heavy fire the shield is fixed to the rifle and the rifle being carried at a vertical position, the shield swings in a way to protect the vital parts—the head and chest.

Art Is Long.

Artman—Crayon portraits are abominable. I'd rather be done in oil.
Speckman—Oh, he was an artist in his line, all right. He was a crafty broker.

Not a Lie.

"Say, Bill, I've struck great luck."
"How's dat?"
"Found a shaniless satchy."
"Where is it?"
"Supportin' me breeches."

A Comforting Thought.

"Did any man ever threaten to shoot himself unless you became his wife?"
"Oh, yes. There were three who did that."
"And did any of them ever carry out his threat?"
"No—no, not exactly; but I have always kind of thought one of them might have done it if he hadn't afterward fallen down a coal-hole with fatal results."

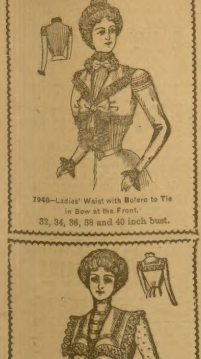
BEAUTIFUL PATTERNS FREE.

An Unparalleled Offer.

The patterns shown below are furnished us by one of the best, if not the best, pattern manufacturers in New York. They comprise the very latest styles, and are unequalled for accuracy in fit, simplicity in use, and are most economical of material. They sell from the stores from twenty-five to fifty cents each. Instructions are printed on every pattern. Three months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 25 cents and any TWO of these patterns FREE. Six months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 50 cents and FIVE of these patterns FREE. This offer is without an equal. If you are wise you will take advantage of it at once. Give the numbers of the patterns and bust measure desired. Enclose money and address,
PATTERN DEPARTMENT, CHICAGO LEDGER, CHICAGO, ILL.

7957—Ladies' Fancy Waist.
7958—Ladies' Seven Gored Skirt.
Waist 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 inch bust.
Skirt 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 inch waist.

7942—Ladies' Basque Waist.
7954—Ladies' Skirt.
Basque 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 inch bust.
Skirt 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 inch waist.



7948—Ladies' Waist with Bolero to Tie in Bow at the Front.
32, 34, 36, 38 and 40 inch bust.

7952—Ladies' Box Plaited Skirt with Apron Overskirt.
22, 24, 26, 28 and 30 inch waist.

7954—Ladies' Blouse Waist with Shield.
32, 34, 36, 38 and 40 inch bust.

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Here is an honest advertisement. No beating around the bush. You can get full 10 to 15 yards of beautiful silk, in any color you desire, absolutely free. We will divide Two Thousand Dollars, payable in cash, as the right of each reader, into a beautiful memory diamond bread pin, together with a 10 to 15 yard piece of beautiful silk, in any color you desire, absolutely free. Our offer of a Solid Gold Diamond Ring and Dress Goods for 98 cents still remains good. Don't miss this opportunity. Send us your name and address and we will send you the silk dress (full 10 to 15 yards, any color you desire) with the beautiful memory diamond bread pin, free of charge. Send us your name and address at once. Don't delay. Write to-day. Address all letters plainly to
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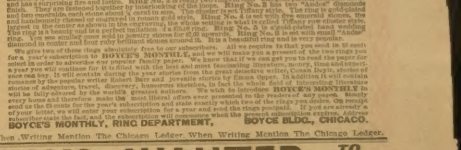
FINE RINGS FREE.



We give every reader of this paper the choice of any two rings shown in this advertisement absolutely free. The following is a description of the rings: Ring No. 1 is a genuine Solitaire American Diamond, 14k gold finish. It is set in genuine Tiffany style, eight claws to hold stone. This ring is a beauty and looks like a $50 ring. Ring No. 2 is the latest Ladies' Belcher style. The ring is 10k gold finish. They are fastened together by interlocking of the links. Ring No. 3 is a Ladies' Opal Ring. The ring is gold-plated and has a beautiful Opal stone set in it. Ring No. 4 is a Ladies' Belcher style. The ring is gold-plated and has a beautiful Opal stone set in it. Ring No. 5 is a Ladies' Tiffany style. The ring is gold-plated and has a beautiful Opal stone set in it. Ring No. 6 is a Ladies' Tiffany style. The ring is gold-plated and handsomely chased or engraved, the whole setting is what is called Tiffany style. Any of these rings will be sent to you absolutely free. Ring No. 7 is a Gold Filled Wedding Ring. The ring is a perfect imitation of a 14k gold wedding ring. Ring No. 8 is set with small Ladies' ring. You see similar ones sold in jewelry stores for $1.00 upwards. Ring No. 9 is set with small Ladies' ring. You see similar ones sold in jewelry stores for $1.00 upwards. Ring No. 10 is a Gent's Ring. It is diamond shape and four perfect brilliant diamonds are set in it. All we require is that you send us 10 cents.

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PICTURES AND NOTES EN ROUTE

Illustrating the Scenic Features of Northern Illinois and Iowa as Seen From the Car Window.

The above is the title of an illustrated booklet, describing the Illinois Central's line between Chicago and Council Bluffs and Omaha. Copies of same will be sent free on receipt of 15 cents, and all such will be filed immediately. Address A. H. HANSON, G. P. A. Illinois Central R. R., Chicago, Illinois.
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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES.

Dorothy's Musn'ts.

I'm sick of "musn'ts," said Dorothy D.,
Sick of "musn'ts" as I can be.
From early morn till the close of day
I hear a "musn't" and never a "may."
It's "You musn't lie there like a sleepy head,"
And "You musn't sit up when it's time for bed,"
"You musn't cry when I comb your curls,"
"You musn't play with those noisy girls,"
"You musn't be silent when spoken to,"
"You musn't chatter as parrots do;"
"You musn't be pert and you musn't be proud;"
"You musn't giggle or laugh aloud;"
"You musn't rumple your nice clean dress;"
"You musn't nod in place of a yes."

So all day long the musn'ts go.
Till I dream at night of an endless row
Of goblin "musn'ts" with great big eyes
That stare at me in shocked surprise.

Oh! I hope I shall live to see the day
When some one will say to me, "Dear, you may";
For I'm sick of "musn'ts," said Dorothy D.,
Sick of "musn'ts" as I can be.

She Was Absorbed.

An amusing anecdote is told of Mary Fairfax Somerville, the famous writer and scientist. While at her work, either in research or in writing, she would become so intent upon it that she was utterly oblivious of her surroundings. This power of concentration grew upon her so that her family came back his customer complained that the steak was frozen. So the waiter called the head waiter, and the head waiter blamed it all on the cook, and the cook was at a loss to explain, and the result was that the frozen steak was taken back into the kitchen as a mysterious curiosity. A new steak was broiled for Mr. Tripler, and this one he ate with much relish.

An Embarrassing Alternative.

A lady whose christian name is Jane, and whose little daughter is named after her, engaged a housekeeper, who is also named Jane.

Thinking that three Janes in one household might occasion confusion, the lady said to the new comer, who was a tall, angular woman, with a rigid air and an uncompromising cast of countenance, "I think, Jane; it will be better for me to call you by your last name if you have no objection."

"NO'm; I have no objection," said the housekeeper, standing stiffly erect, salute in hand.

"Call me 'Darling,' ma'am, if you prefer. That's my name."

Couldn't Fool Him.

A butcher in Manchester, N. H., tried to fool a dog which was in the habit of coming to his stand daily for meat, and bore the name of "Horace Greeley." One day Horace went to the butcher stand, on which, as usual, he placed his 10-cent stamp. The butcher put the stamp in his drawer, and paid no attention to the dog, thinking it was a good joke on the animal. Horace didn't understand why his goods were not given to him, but waited patiently, keeping a sharp eye on the young man all the while as he followed him to every counter. After a few minutes spent in this way he began to comprehend, and decided to play a little joke in return. So he coolly walked up to the bench, seized a quarter of lamb and trotted off with it, with indignation and triumph depicted in every wag of his tail.

Muriel—Granny, is it a very narrow path that leads to heaven?
Granny—Yes, darling, very, very narrow.
Muriel—How will you manage, granny?

often laughingly referred to it, and it led to some very funny incidents.

One day her friend, Harriet Martineau, the authoress and political economist, went to visit her. Mr. Somerville received the visitor, and explained that it would be almost impossible to make her presence known, as she was writing. However, as he led the guest into the room where Mrs. Somerville was busily engaged at her desk. Several members of the family, and some friends, were present, but they were talking without fear of disturbing the writer.

Mr. Somerville stood by the table, opposite to his wife, and began, in a loud voice, to address her; but as she paid no attention to him, he began to use extreme language, calling her lazy; saying that she was not industrious, and adding many things that kept the company laughing, for they all enjoyed the joke.

Everything he said, however, fell upon deaf ears, and Mrs. Somerville worked on, utterly regardless of his presence.

Suddenly he ceased speaking, and the unwonted silence made her look up.

"Pardon me," she said, in the quaintest surprise, "did you say something?"

Puzzling Trick.

Liquid air is perhaps the coldest thing in the world. It is so cold a cake of ice is like a fierce fire as compared with it, for a kettle of liquid air placed on a cake of ice will boil just as water boils over a hot fire. It freezes mercury so hard that one can drive nails with it. The story is told that Mr. Charles E. Tripler, the experimenter in liquid air, recently took a quart can of the remarkable substance with him on a visit to a friend. On the way he stopped in a restaurant to eat a beefsteak. The waiter brought in a hot broiled steak and placed it in front of Mr. Tripler. As soon as the waiter's back was turned Mr. Tripler hastily opened the can and exposed the meat to the liquid air. Instantly the steak was frozen hard as a rock. When the waiter

Washington Crows.

Two crows, said to have been there for many years, are constantly flying about the turrets of the Franklin public school building in Washington. But the strange thing about it is that they are never seen about the building except on Saturday, Sunday or a holiday, the presence and noise of the pupils about the grounds might be said to keep the crows away. But the crows are never seen during school hours when there are no children about, during days and Sundays may, by some sort of instinct, they seem to know that the coast is known to them. Holidays are irregular, but the crows know when one comes, and are surely at it does they are on the turrets or about them all day. They come early and stay late, but no one who has watched them knows where they roost, for sometimes they fly in one direction and again in an opposite direction.

Valuable Pebbles.

Between the northern point of Long Island and Watch Hill lies a row of little islands, two of which—Fluin Island and Goose Island—possess a peculiar form of mineral wealth. It consists in heaps of richly colored quartz pebbles, showing red, yellow, purple and other hues, which are locally called agates. They are used in making stained windows, and there is sufficient demand for them in New York to keep the owners of one or two sloops employed in gathering them from the beaches, where the waves continually roll and polish them, bringing out the beauty of their colors.

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